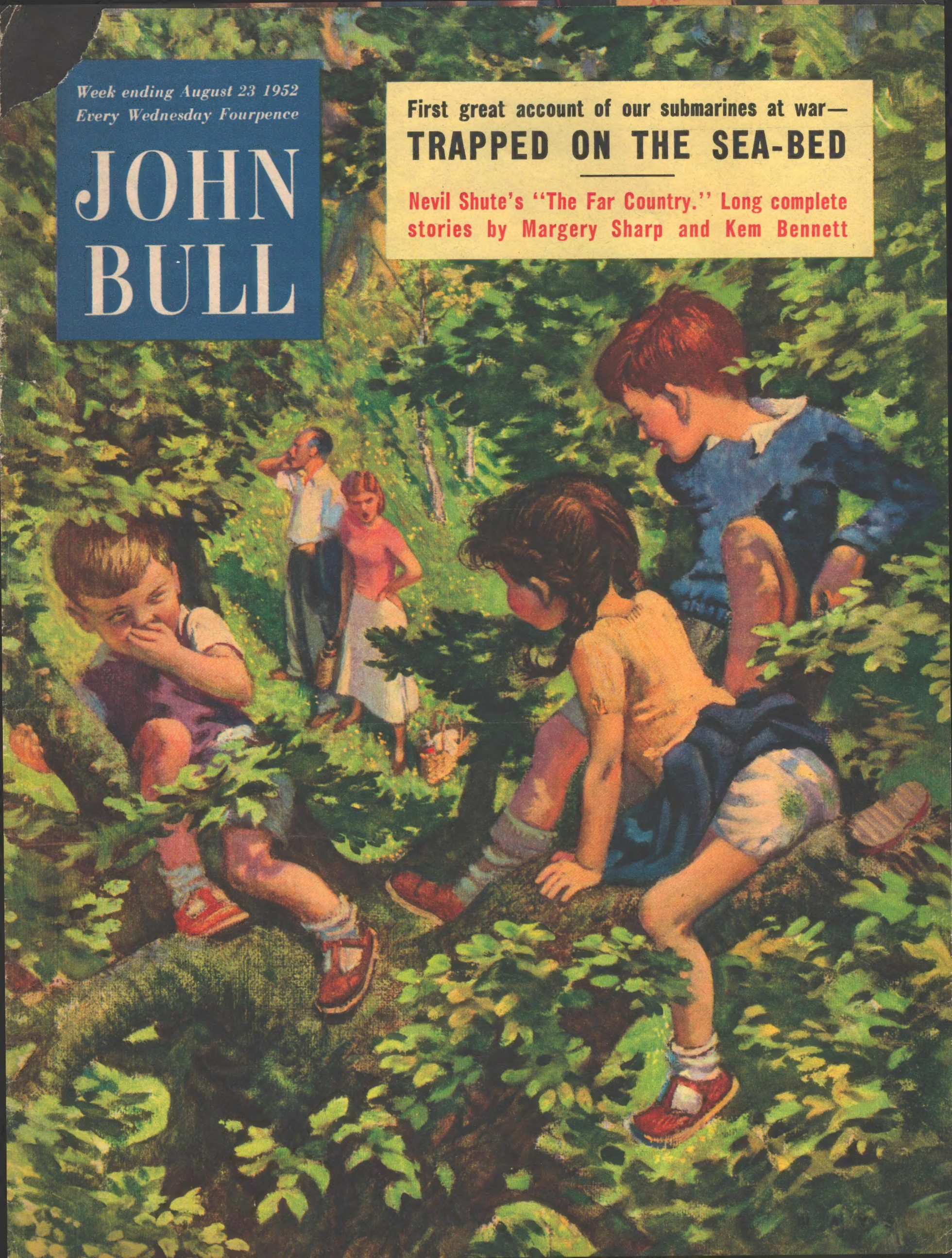
Week ending August 23 1952
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL



First great account of our submarines at war—

TRAPPED ON THE SEA-BED

Nevil Shute's "The Far Country." Long complete stories by Margery Sharp and Kem Bennett

Snaps the word

FOR ALL YOUR GOOD TIMES

Snapshots not only add to the fun. They also help you to enjoy your good times over and over again. Each of the snaps below carries a simple hint to help you to make the most of every roll of 'Kodak' film.

Not another word from you! You can catch such priceless expressions if you take close-ups of your pets. Some cameras can be focused for close-ups. Others need a 'Kodak' close-up lens.

A good innings deserves a good snap. But when you take it, be sure the sun is not shining into your lens. You score every time by using 'Kodak' film.

They grow up so quickly that you'll treasure snaps like this. Help to keep them sharp by holding the camera still as you shoot. 'Kodak' film captures the sparkling detail.

They'll all want copies of a snap like this, so order some extra prints. Try having the sky as background for your own snaps. It makes them stand out.

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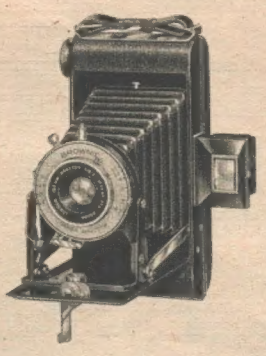

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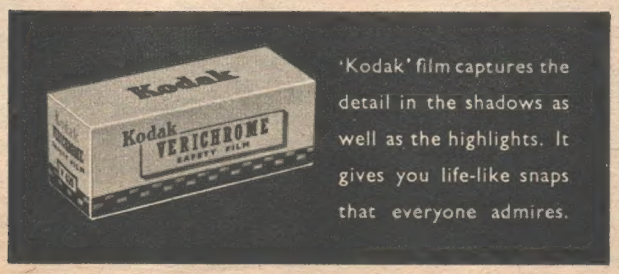

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FILM

Radio's Cold War

WHEN THE RADIO SHOW opens at Olympia next week, many visitors, particularly from Kent and East Anglia, while admiring the new sets, will ask hopeful, and pertinent, questions about the jamming and counter-jamming which often spoils reception in their areas.

The new committee which the Foreign Office is setting up to inquire into Overseas Broadcasting will also have something to say about this major inconvenience of Radio's Cold War.

But the problem of how to shout down the Soviets on the air, which directly affects ordinary listening here, cannot be solved without tackling the growing problem of how to compete with our own friends, especially the Americans.

A JOKE is currently reported from Hungary which reflects British radio's enviable reputation in Europe. The Prime Minister, Rakosi, is supposed to have bent across his desk and, in doing so, broken a button. He rings for his valet, who comes in with a button and a needle and thread.

"How on earth did you know that I had broken a button?" asks Rakosi.

"I heard it on the B.B.C.," answers the valet.

But at present the B.B.C. has to fight for its overseas life every day and night.

The Voice of America, the new "Radio Free Europe," the big American station in Berlin, and assorted transmitters from the Zuyder Zee to the Mediterranean are all crowding the short-wave band more and more.

The number of transmissions increases every month. A wavelength vacated for a few days is lost for ever. Rival technicians in some other country note the silence and rush in to fill it.

On top of all this are the Communist jamming stations.

BRITAIN is spending £4,750,000 a year on Overseas Broadcasts, and roughly seventeen of the ninety-one hours a week during which we are on the air, are devoted to the Cold War.

That attack can always win, given enough money—and enough freedom of the air for British broadcasters.

But it cannot succeed and so justify its cost and the annoyance to British listeners unless fair shares in wavelengths are settled and maintained.

THIS peacetime struggle against Russia should be conducted in co-operation with the other free nations—but there is no unity, no order and no sharing in this matter. Instead there is chaos abroad and interference with reception at home.

Let a B.B.C. official admit it: "We know our allies are broadcasting and they know we are. That's all. The only way we act together is in our three daily half-hours to Russia. To make sure that the Russians hear something, despite their jamming, we all concentrate our broadcasts at the same times."

When the British listener's reception crackles and splutters and dies because of a jamming clash, it is galling to realize that this could be avoided if we of the West arranged our radio as sensibly as we are trying to arrange our military and economic set-up.

The politicians should now take over from the engineers to work out a real international agreement on wavelength sharing and "spheres of influence."

SEVERAL ways of doing so are now possible. The British Government could make a start through the United Nations, through N.A.T.O., or through the Council of Europe, which meets next month in Strasbourg.

Let us continue to beat the Soviet jamming, but do it in accord with our friends, so that the people of the Iron Curtain countries can hear the truth—and our own people can listen to their radios without silly interference.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

FROM memories of the tricks which his own four daughters often tried to play on him when they were small, Douglas L. Mays painted this picnic scene, which he has set in a copse near his home in Buckinghamshire. He likes the casual life of the country and says he seldom feels at home when he is surrounded by crowds of people. It's easy to see from his painting that he also has a soft spot for this sort of mischievousness.

"One man went to mow, went to mow a . . . . Phew! I fear the crafty Hawkins has made a downward adjustment of the blades—they're well below daisy level. Should I remove the grass-box or shout for help? . . . . Hawkins! Harness the horses! And bring me a bucket of Rose's before I start snorting!"

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makes thirst worth while

Fight Mouth Acid & save your teeth

Why do most people lose half their teeth before they're 40? Dentists say this is largely due to mouth-acid and advise 'Milk of Magnesia'* as the most effective way to dispel it.

One toothpaste and one only contains 'Milk of Magnesia' and that is — Phillips' Dental Magnesia Toothpaste. So give yourself a real chance of keeping your teeth . . . healthy, attractive and free from harmful mouth-acid. Start using Phillips' now!

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TO PUT it another way—how do we manage to offer you this splendid new range of Kelton '21' wrist-watches at such easy-to-afford prices? There are three answers. Kelton '21' are made in an ultra-modern factory where top efficiency lowers costs. They are made on the same high-precision machines used for making high-priced watches. They are British-made and free from duty. See these handsome, wonderfully reliable watches at your jeweller's. *Compare them, try them on, judge for yourself!*

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Free Speech

Marriage or a start in the world?

AFTER several years of struggle to send our son to a university, my wife and I have been upset to learn that he intends getting married, without having asked our advice. We feel that he should settle down in his chosen career first, rather than have to face possibly difficult times ahead with a wife to support.

I have never thought it right for parents to interfere in their children's lives. But now, faced with having to approve my son's engagement before he is really started in the world, I am not so sure.—H. C. D., Northampton.

Land Of Variety

ARGUMENTS for and against emigration to Australia are often inaccurate, but from my experience of the country I should like to point out the endless variety that anyone who comes here will find. With another English girl, I have hitch-hiked 8,000 miles through Australia, along the rugged coastline to Melbourne, and across the prosperous Victorian wheat country to Adelaide. The 'Ghan Express took us through the desert to Alice Springs and a fruit truck to the tropical port of Darwin. After journeying for days through the empty Northern Territory, suffering from one of its worst drought years, we reached the gold-mining town of Tennant Creek. In Queensland, we visited the coral islands of the Barrier Reef and drove back to Brisbane through sugar cane fields and pine farms. In our trip, we met city dwellers, prospectors, miners, station owners, drovers, aborigines and Thursday Islanders. We saw drought and flood, and the great cities, the jungle, the bush and the desert which make up Australia.—PAMELA JAY, 39A Elizabeth Bay Road, Elizabeth Bay, New South Wales, Australia.

The One-purl Tour

PEOPLE who prefer knitting to watching the scenery always amaze me. On a coach tour in Scotland recently, I noticed two women in front of me

knitting continuously, without once raising their eyes to the marvellous views which could be seen during the journey. It seemed that all they would remember of the trip was one purl and one plain.—NEIL MUIR, 76A Weald Road, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Police To The Fore

RONALD CLARK'S interesting article on Snowdon rescues (JOHN BULL, July 26) said that the police leave much of the work to rescue teams. Here in Scotland, at any rate, that is not true. The police are responsible for all rescue arrangements, working with local stalkers, gamekeepers and shepherds. I am a policeman's daughter and have shared in the long trek made necessary by the foolishness of some novice. I know the ordeal of the cold, the wind and the rain during the well-nigh hopeless search, when the victim could be within three feet of where rescuers are passing, and still not be found. And the police are always there, taking the most arduous stretches themselves.—MISS F. FULLERTON, Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire.

Penalty Of Teaching

AFTER teaching in a State-aided school for more than forty years, I have retired on a pension. I should like to supplement this by taking extra work. But if I take up teaching (except in a private school), I find that my pension will be reduced. I can become a navvy, a shop assistant or a baby-sitter, but I must not teach—when the country is desperately short of teachers.—R. L., Hants.

THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN FLIES

by VICTOR CANNING

Begins in John Bull
September 6—See page 29

Not-So-Far Country

READING Nevil Shute's *The Far Country* recalled to me that, when my husband was in Melbourne recently, I did not feel that he was very far distant, as I received air mail letters

in six days and a cable in less than twelve hours. Nevil Shute's impressions of people, places and Australian life in general are astonishingly accurate. The enclosed snapshot is of the Windsor Hotel at Melbourne, where the fictional Jack and Jane Dorman were planning to stay.—MRS. F. C. LAWSON, 78 Blackbutts Lane, Walney Isle, Barrow, Lancashire.

This week's instalment of "The Far Country" begins on page 16.

Risk-taking Mothers

WORKING on scaffolding over a busy main street, lowering twenty-foot-long steel poles, I was astonished to see a woman arguing with one of our men who had stopped her from passing underneath, with her two children. Most men step off the pavement or cross the road when they see work going on overhead, but I am often surprised at the foolishness of mothers with prams or children, who walk along the pavement beneath us while we are working.—G. SMITH, 10 Moseley Terrace, Woodhouse, Leeds.

Vanishing Witnesses

HAVING been a bus conductor, I can answer your correspondent who asked ("Free Speech," August 2) why witnesses of accidents are unwilling to come forward. When my bus was involved in an accident, I received a gruelling from two solicitors which I shall never forget. I was a nervous wreck at the end and vowed that never again would I be a witness if I could avoid it.—A. H., Glasgow.

. . . I answered a broadcast appeal for witnesses, lost one day's pay (19s. 3d.) in consequence, and received 7s. 6d. expenses.—F. T., Godalming, Surrey.

Brighter Seaside

DURING a recent visit to Ostend, I noticed that Belgian resorts seem to provide much more entertainment for children than is found in our holiday towns. Among the things I noticed were physical culture classes for children on the beach, festoons of fairy lights across the main shopping streets, and, at the end of the jetty, circular fishing nets which were lowered and raised from the sea by winches and could be operated by visitors on payment of a small charge. British seaside towns would benefit if they adopted some of these unusual attractions.—MAURICE CAERBURN, 12 Girdlers Road, London, W.14.

The No-lock Age

PRESENT-DAY designers seem to have an aversion to locks and keys. In our modern house, only the back and front doors and the bathroom have locks. There are no locks on any cupboards, and the same applies to our furniture. There is not a lockable drawer anywhere. We have five lively children, and how I long for some means of locking things away from them.—MRS. E. QUIN, 28 Arnott Gardens, Kingsknowe, Edinburgh.

Ted Ray's Big Hit

WITH my brother Jack, I was on the bill at the London Music Hall when Ted Ray, then known as "Nedlo," made his début there. He was a smash hit all right, and the audience just loved him. We quickly got in touch with our agent, George Barclay, affectionately known as "the Guv'nor," and urged him to see the new act before it was snapped up. In the meantime, Nedlo promised that he would not sign any agreement until the Guv'nor had seen him. A few days later, the Guv'nor's representative, Bob Wade, saw the act and signed it up immediately. And not before time, as Nedlo was being besieged with offers.—DAVE SHARP, 137 Adare Walk, London, S.W.16.

. . . I was so pleased to read that Ted Ray still remembers Mrs. Bent, because it was at her house at 64 Denstone Road, Stoke Newington, that I first met Ted. I was only a lad then and Bobbie Bent was my best friend. We both thought Ted was the finest comedian ever. I do not know whether Mrs. Bent is still alive, as I have lost touch with them, since Bobbie was killed in a motor cycle accident.—CHARLES H. VENNING, 32 Douglas Road, London, N.1.

This week's instalment of Ted Ray's autobiography begins on page 17.

Clever Redheads

RED-HAIRED people, in my experience, always seem to be quick-witted and efficient despite their reputation for hasty tempers. If I had to interview applicants for a job requiring fast thinking, my task would be made easier if there were redheads among them.—R. S. K., Hildenborough, Kent.

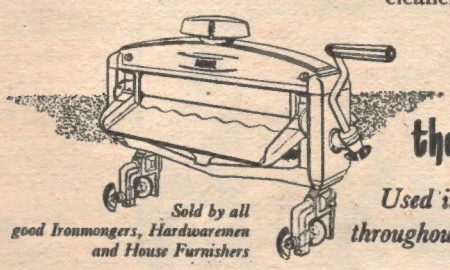
Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply

How new is a frock?

Is it brand new, or does it look like new? In either case, how can you keep it that way? How can you make all your pretty things last longer—and go on looking lovely? Well, the answer to that problem is the ACME Cleanser-Wringer.

* * * *

It's the scientific combination of Pressure Distribution and Pressure Indication that does the trick! Acme pressure distribution operates over the whole length of the resilient rubber rollers and wrings the thin as well as the thick parts of the wash, expelling embedded dirt along with the surplus water . . . while Acme's new 3-point pressure indication takes the guesswork out of wringing. Everything from a bib to a blanket, gets exactly the right pressure suited to its weight and texture without any strain on delicate fibres. The whole wash—silks, cottons, linens, woollens—comes out fresher, cleaner, and with longer life ahead.



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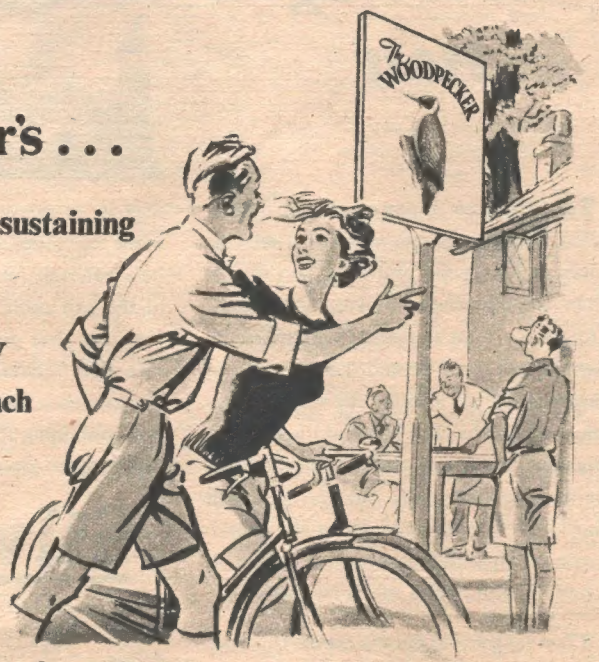

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- **Is refreshing, sustaining and delicious**
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2½ lbs. of apples to every flagon

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BOTTLED VINEGAR is best for pickling!

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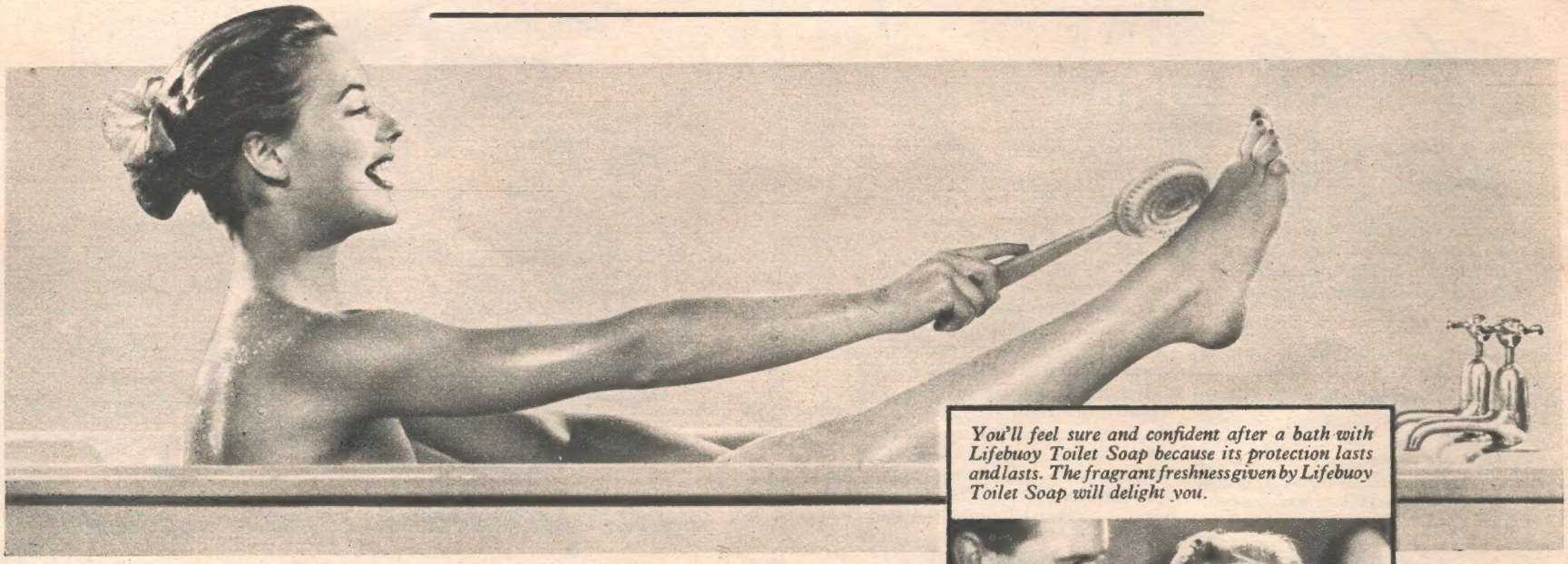
LIFEBUOY TOILET SOAP protects you longer —really stops B.O. (body odour)



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"You couldn't do better!"

"You couldn't do better than you did on that last job, Barlow. I knew you had the necessary experience, but the energy and drive you showed was really remarkable."

"You can thank Phyllosan for that, sir."

"I am all the more impressed because I had been thinking you were beginning to feel your age. But what is it you say I have to thank Phyllosan for?"

"For my energy and drive, sir. Phyllosan fortifies the over-forties. I have been taking it for some time."

"What exactly do you mean by 'fortifies the over-forties'?"

"I mean that Phyllosan has increased my energy and staying power, strengthened my nerves, improved my digestion and generally made me feel fitter and more vigorous."

"What it has done for you makes me think I ought to take a course of Phyllosan myself."

"If I may say so, sir—you couldn't do better?"

PHYLLOSAN

fortifies the over-forties

by restoring digestive and metabolic tone

strengthening the nerves and increasing energy

Of all chemists, 3/8, 6/-, **NEW 12/6 SIZE,** *and* 22/4

THE SILVIKRIN GUIDE TO HAIR HEALTH

No. 3

Receding Hair

The cause A man may begin to suffer from receding hair at any time between the ages of twenty-five and fifty. This type of hair trouble (known as Premature Senile Alopecia) is not associated with severe illness. Often it can be said that the strain of modern life has affected the very foundation of hair health. The scalp loses tone, tightens on the skull and restricts the circulation to the hair roots – and the body itself no longer supplies enough of the amino-acids which form hair protein. Thus cut off from its natural food, the hair withers away.

The right approach This condition must be treated as serious, from the very start. Regular massage will tone up the scalp by stimulating a healthy flow of blood in the capillaries. But, above all, additional 'raw materials' for the hair must be supplied to the hair roots from outside the body. For this vital purpose, regular massage with Pure Silvikrin is essential. For Pure Silvikrin is a concentrated organic solution containing *all* the 18 amino-acids that hair needs to grow and thrive.

Silvikrin

THE HAIR'S NATURAL FOOD

Use Pure Silvikrin in severe cases of dandruff and thinning hair. (12/6 for a month's supply). As a daily dressing use Silvikrin Hair Tonic Lotion, or, for dry heads, Silvikrin Lotion with Oil. Both 2/9 (large economy size 4/10). All prices include tax.

SP.15

ONE OF OUR SUBMARINES by Commander EDWARD YOUNG, D.S.O., D.S.C.

TRAPPED ON THE SEA-BED

The suddenness of the collision shocked "Umpire's" crew. There was a violent crash, a muffled explosion—then, as the submarine plunged downwards, the sea began to flood in. . . . Second part of the real-life story of the first R.N.V.R. officer to join the submarine service

WHEN THE TRAWLER fell away after the collision, Wingfield found his submarine sinking under him by the head. In less than thirty seconds *Umpire* plunged under, leaving Wingfield, Tony Godden, our navigator, and the two look-outs in the water. In the darkness there was shouting and confusion, but the four men kept together at first. But presently one and then the other of the look-outs dropped out of the circle.

Tony Godden, who was wearing long fur-lined seaboots, gasped out that he could not kick them free and that he was sinking. For a while Wingfield helped to support him, but Tony finally let go and sank out of sight. It seemed an age before the trawler's boat appeared, and Wingfield was unconscious when he was hauled on board. When he came to, and realized that he, the captain, was apparently the sole survivor, his feelings can be imagined.

When the captain left the wardroom to go up on the bridge in response to Tony's message about the approaching convoy, Peter Bannister, the first lieutenant, and I were in the wardroom, decoding a wireless signal. We were travelling up the east coast in our own shipping lanes at the time, and were not expecting anything untoward to happen. The wardroom was divided from the control-room only by a thin steel partition, and by curtains from the passage-way; at sea these curtains were drawn back, and Peter and I could hear the helmsman repeat the orders which came down the voice-pipe to him from the bridge.

"Shut Watertight Doors!"

When we heard him repeat the captain's emergency order, "Hard-a-port," we pushed back our chairs and stood up, our eyes meeting in question and alarm. We stumbled out into the passage-way, and Peter at once gave the order to "Shut watertight doors!" Almost immediately, we heard another urgent yell down the voice-pipe, but before this last order from the bridge could be repeated by the helmsman there was a violent crash forrard in the torpedo-stowage compartment, followed by the blue-white flare and muffled thump of an electrical explosion. The boat rocked to port, stayed there a few seconds, and then slid drunkenly forward and over to starboard as she began her plunge to the bottom. If the water were deep here, its weight would crush us like an eggshell. Most of

"Shut that door!" I heard Peter yell in a fury. But the men were still coming through. I hadn't the courage to deny them their chance to escape

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD OSMOND

Commander Edward Young, R.N.V.(S)R., was the first "amateur" to join the submarine service. Here he is on the bridge of *Sealion*, in which he served after his escape from the *Umpire* disaster

the lights had gone out. Then men were running past us from the next compartment. Peter was yelling, "Shut that door!" and I had my hand on it, letting the men run through, disobeying Peter because I hadn't the courage to deny any of them a chance so long as the water was not yet actually at their heels. Somehow the farther door through to the damaged compartment had shut—whether blown to by the explosion or deliberately shut from the inside by a last nameless act of self-sacrifice as the sea came flooding in, we should never know.

"Shut that bloody door!" repeated Peter in a fury, but by now all the men from the intervening compartment were through. With some difficulty, because of the angle of the boat, I pulled the door up towards me and clamped it shut.

I turned, and struggled up the tilting deck into the control-room. The boat was listing to starboard and sloping forward at an angle of about ten degrees. Water was pouring in from what seemed to be a hundred places. Peter was struggling with the outboard battery-ventilation-valve overhead, desperately seeking an explanation for this inrush of water, and acutely aware of the fatal danger of chlorine gas if the sea-water should find its way into the battery cells under the deck.

I reached up to help him, glad in my numbed state of something positive to do. But the valve was already shut, as we knew it should have been, and we must look elsewhere for the breach in our defences. To my paralysed brain it seemed that the shock of the collision had cracked the hull and started rivets along the whole length of the ship. Surprisingly enough, no water was coming down the conning-tower; presumably the upper hatch had fallen shut when the boat took on a list immediately before she sank.

Peter was now calling for more light, and one or two of the men searched about for the emergency hand-lamps. I remembered that I had a torch in my drawer in the wardroom, so I retraced my steps, moving with difficulty down the wet and sloping deck. In the passage-way the water was already knee-deep. I sloshed through it and pulled myself up into the wardroom. Streams of ice-green water were cascading from somewhere overhead, drenching the beautiful new curtains and bunks in a universal deluge.

Could Have Stopped Water

If I had brought a conscious intelligence to bear on the source of this waterfall I should have hit on something that ought to have been obvious to all of us. But not until the whole thing was over did I realize that all this water must have been coming from the *ventil on shaft*, now open to sea pressure through the damaged torpedo-stowage compartment. By reaching up my hand over the captain's bunk I could have shut the valve on the bulkhead quite easily, and the flow of water would have stopped. But my brain, as though stunned by the catastrophe, had become incapable of constructive thought.

I found the torch and splashed my way back to the control-room. As I did so, it occurred to me to wonder what depth we were at. I shone the torch on the depth gauges and found, to my surprise, that they were both reading only a little over sixty feet. This meant we were in very shallow water, with the bow presumably resting on the bottom at something like eighty feet. I asked Peter whether it was possible to *blow* her up. It was unlikely, since we had been at full buoyancy at the time of the collision, and a vast quantity of water must have entered forrard to have overcome that buoyancy so suddenly. It was obvious that a large gash had been torn at the top of the pressure hull in the torpedo-stowage compartment, and that the compartment had filled in a matter of seconds. We should never get her up with all that weight of water in her.

However, Peter thought it would do no harm to try, so one by one he opened up the valves of the high-pressure air-panel until all five ballast tanks and the two main internal tanks were blowing. But it was no use: the depth gauges did not even flicker.

The sea continued to pour in on us, with a terrible and relentless noise, and the water in the compartment grew deeper every minute. As the level crept up the starboard side, live electrical contacts began spitting venomously, with little lightning flashes. Vaguely I wondered if we were all going to be electrocuted. In the half darkness the men had become anonymous groping figures, desperately coming and going. There was no panic, but most of us were suffering from a sort of mental concussion. I discovered one man trying to force open the watertight door that I had shut earlier. "My pal's in there," he was moaning. "My pal's in there."

"It's no good," I told him, "she's filled right up forrard and there's no one left alive the other side of that door." He turned away, sobbing.

I Found Myself Alone

For some reason we decided it would be useful if we could find more torches. I knew there must be one or two others somewhere in the wardroom, so I made yet another expedition down the slope, wading through the pool that was now waist-deep. I spent some time in the wardroom, shivering with fear and cold, ransacking every drawer and cupboard, pushing aside the forsaken paraphernalia of personal belongings—underclothes, razors, pipes, photographs of wives and girl friends. But I could find only one torch that was still working. Holding it clear of the water, I returned to the control-room. It was deserted.

The door into the engine-room was shut. Had I spent longer in the wardroom than I thought? Perhaps they had all escaped from the engine-room escape hatch, without realizing that I had

been left behind. Even if they had not yet left the submarine, they might already have started flooding the compartment in preparation for an escape, and if the flooding had gone beyond a certain point it would be impossible to get that door open again. I listened, but could hear nothing beyond the monotonous, pitiless sound of pouring water. In this terrible moment I must have come very near to panic.

I could at least try hammering on the engine-room door. Looking around for a heavy instrument, I found a valve spanner and began moving towards the door. As I did so I heard a voice quite close to me say, "Who's that?" I looked up and found I was standing under the conning-tower. In it, to my infinite relief, I saw Peter with an able seaman and one of the engine-room artificers. "Where the hell have you come from?" said Peter. "Where the hell's everybody gone?" I retorted. "Any room for me up there?"

"We ought to be able to squeeze you in," said Peter. "The others are going to escape from the engine-room."

Ready To Swim For It

Grateful as never before for the company of my fellow-creatures I climbed up through the lower hatch. Four of us in the tiny space made a tight squeeze, Peter at the top of the ladder with his head jammed up against the upper hatch, the A.B. half-way up the ladder with his bottom wedged against the side of the tower, leaving just room for me and the E.R.A. standing at the foot of the tower, with our feet on the edge of the lower hatch-opening. The E.R.A. was in a bad way, vomiting and hardly able to stand.

In the centre of the upper hatch was a small port or round window, made of glass thick enough to withstand tremendous pressure. Number One said that he could see a glimmer of light through it, and supposed it to be caused by a searchlight from some vessel waiting overhead. This encouraged him to think we ought to be able to swim to the surface and be picked up without much difficulty. We knew the control-room depth-gauges were reading just over sixty feet; the upper hatch was something like fifteen feet higher than the normal surface water-line (the point of reference for the depth gauges) and was probably only about forty-five feet from the surface, say the height of eight men standing on top of each other. It ought to be easy.

"Shut the lower lid," said Peter, "and let's just think this out." I bent down, shut the hatch and pulled the clip over. We then discussed exactly what we were going to do. We agreed that to wear Davis escape gear would be an unnecessary complication in the confined space. One of the dangers was that on our way up we might crack our skulls on the cross-bar between the periscope standards. We hoped (vainly, as it turned out) that we might be assisted in our rise to the surface by the bubble of air which would be released from the conning-tower as the hatch opened.

The drill was simple. Peter would open the hatch, and as the water came in each man would fill his lungs with air and climb out as fast as he could. Except for the poor E.R.A., who was sick beyond comfort or encouragement, we were by now quite calm, even cheerful.

How long we considered the situation I cannot remember; but at last Peter said, "Well, the next thing is to see if we can open this hatch against the sea pressure." Bracing himself against the side of the tower, he pushed upwards. The hatch remained firmly shut. Somehow we must raise the pressure inside the tower.

It occurred to me that while we had been talking the pressure had still been building up in the control-room below us owing to the continuing inrush of water. I eased off the clip of the hatch under my feet, and sure enough there came the sharp hiss of air forcing its way into the tower. I allowed the air to come in until, after a minute or two, I became aware of a peculiar, faint smell. "Hallo," I said, "I think I can smell chlorine gas."

"All right," said Peter, "shut the lid again

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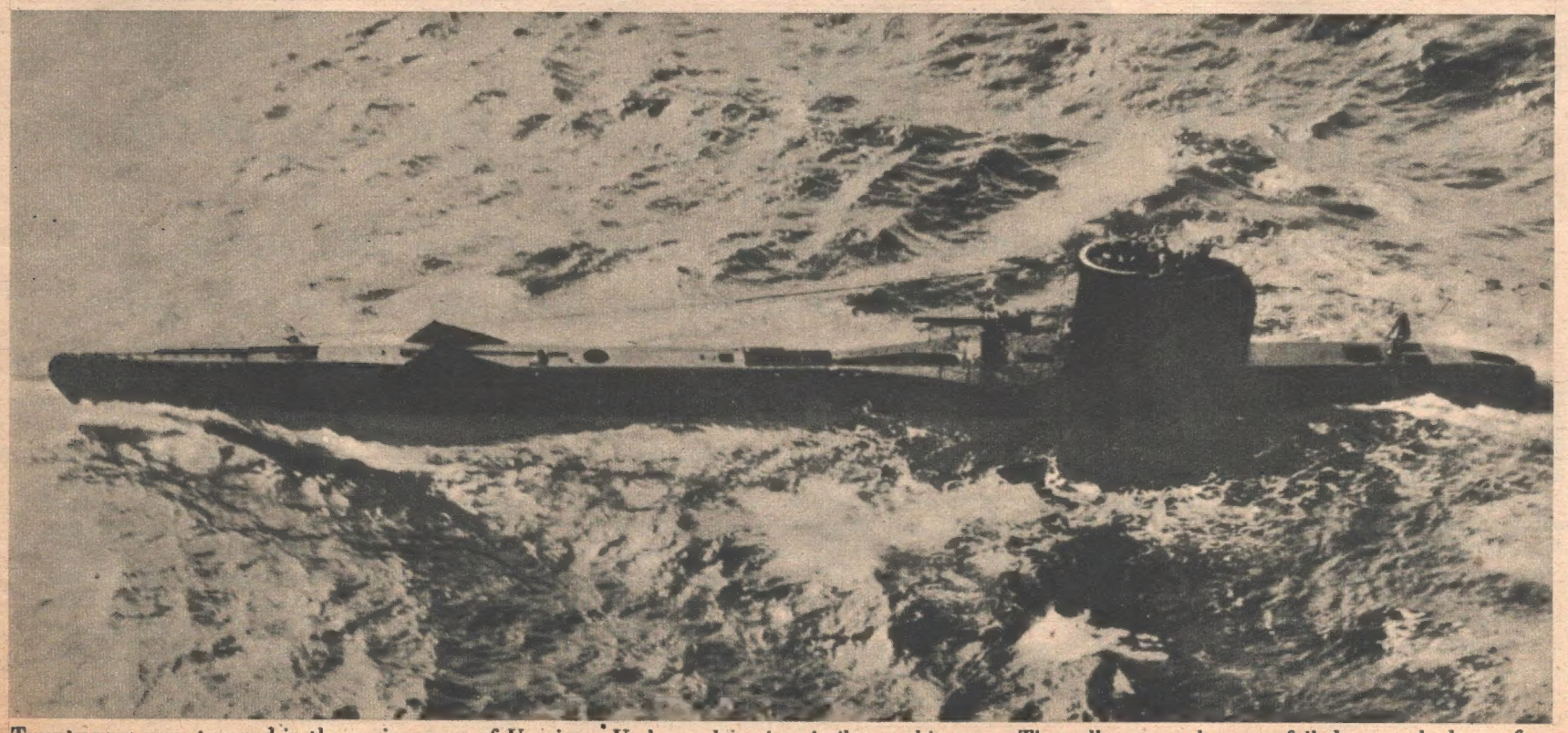
Umpire's captain, Mervyn Wingfield. He was on the bridge when the submarine sank and was unconscious in the water when picked up

Young and three others made their escape bid from *Umpire* through a conning-tower like the one shown here. They did not use escape gear



Twenty men were trapped in the engine-room of *Umpire*, a U-class submarine similar to this one. They all got out, but two failed to reach the surface

Mr. Rickaby blinked about him short-sightedly. Surely he couldn't miss me there behind the tree? I tried to help him find me; oh, how I tried

Thief of time

by MARGERY SHARP

ILLUSTRATED BY SHOWELL

I had stolen fifteen minutes from Mr. Rickaby—fifteen vital minutes from his life. It was worse than ordinary theft. He had to be repaid

I DID NOT AS A CHILD give much thought to such major abstractions as life, death and eternity. I hadn't the leisure: I had four brothers and a baby sister, a half-share in a pony, two Sealyhams and a fluctuating number of Belgian hares. In my tenth year, however—memorable also as the year when my mother allowed me to wear pigtails—circumstances forced me for some weeks to grapple with the phenomenon of *time*. These circumstances were of my own making, and the result of a crime: I had stolen fifteen minutes belonging to our esteemed friend and neighbour, Mr. Rickaby.

Even today, forty years later, I am still astounded by the far-reaching consequences of my attempts to give them back.

Mr. Rickaby was an elderly mathematician who had come to spend his declining years in our Dorset village. As a rule our village attracted retired colonels: Mr. Rickaby was a retired professor. He conformed, however, so exactly to type—being fragile, untidy and absent-minded—that everyone knew where they were with him, and I cannot better explain how thoroughly he was accepted than by recording that the Marlowes of Old Mill allowed their daughter Cecilia to act as his secretary.

In 1911 a secretary was rather an unusual thing to be, especially for a girl of good family; the Marlowes' family was so good, and so old, that they seemed to be fading away from sheer age and goodness. Cecilia's parents always reminded us children of the long, thin, shadowy-transparent figures in the stained-glass windows of our village church. They were vegetarians. Cecilia, though also long and thin, had more vitality, and what I see today as an instinct of self-preservation. She couldn't type, of course, but she wrote a very clear hand, and by dint of sheer concentration soon learnt to disentangle Mr. Rickaby's notes, and copy out his mathematical formulae, with perfect accuracy. Mr. Rickaby paid her twenty pounds a year, and after that the Marlowes

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Googie Withers, ex-dumb blonde

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

The onetime slave to peroxide has joined the front rank of dramatic actresses. It has mostly been due to determination—but a sense of humour has helped

ONE BLUSTERY MARCH DAY this year a well-known film actress, followed by two actors, walked out of the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. Ignoring the waiting taxis, the trio walked to the docks and boarded a ferry for the pleasure grounds of New Brighton. The pilgrimage was completed on foot to a circular building known as the Floral Pavilion. The film star, a five foot five inch brunette named Georgette Lizette Withers, pressed her small nose against a window and announced: "There's where it all began!"

Miss Withers, who also answers to the name Googie, a Bengali word meaning "clown," was making one of her occasional sentimental journeys back to the first stage that gave her a long run. As one of Madame Helena Lehminski's Charming Young Ladies—"experts in every branch of terpischore"—Googie toiled at the Floral Pavilion from May until October, 1932. For three shows a day her weekly salary was thirty shillings.

That New Brighton stage was somewhat smaller than the dressing-room Googie now occupies in London's West End. Her progress from the chorus to the front rank of dramatic actresses has not been without its tribulations. The route took her via the film studios, where at one time she almost drowned in a vat of beer to draw laughs as George Formby's stooge. Those were the days when Googie was a slave to the peroxide bottle, transforming her dark brown hair into the brassy shade demanded by the dumb blonde rôles she invariably played.

"Googie was a brash and rather plump showgirl," says one friend. "She has developed into a gracious hostess and a well-read woman of the theatre. It is almost a case of the clown with a secret ambition to play Hamlet."

Invited To Stratford

In fact, Googie, who has played the comic with Formby, Tommy Trinder and Arthur Askey, is now a candidate for Shakespearian parts. She has been invited to Stratford for a season (film commitments forced her to decline) and on the opening night of her current play, *Winter Journey*, the producer declared, "I can see nothing but Ibsen for you now."

The change from chorus girl to actress has been accompanied by a similar development in Googie's private life from bachelor girl into wife and mother. In 1947, at the age of thirty, she said: "I haven't married. You know how it is—either I haven't liked them enough or they haven't liked me enough. But I should like to marry and to stay married." The following year she was wed to Australian actor John McCallum. Their baby, Joanna, is now two years old.

Googie's achievement of a serious stage career is the product of her determination. When she was cast as a surgeon in *White Corridors*, a film about a hospital, Googie decided that she must learn the rudiments of surgery. She watched operations and even prevailed on her director, Pat Jackson, to join her in a detailed study of operating theatre technique.

"We went along to the hospital," Jackson recalls, "and were properly gowned up. One of the assistants happened to be late and the surgeon was noticeably worried, but nothing bothered Googie. She stood there watching like a batsman waiting for the first ball. I was all right until the first incision was made. It was a particularly bloody operation, and I had to retreat to a quiet corner and be sick. When I staggered back to the operating theatre, there was Googie, not turning a hair."

The success of *White Corridors* influenced impresario Henry Sherek to cast Googie in *Winter Journey*. She plays an American actor's wife, and at first Googie demurred for fear of being unable to produce the right accent. "Googie," Sherek reminded her, "you played a slut in *It Always Rains On Sunday*. You are not a slut, but you played the part beautifully. Now don't

Actress who came up from the chorus: Googie, with her husband, John McCallum, and their daughter

For her part as a surgeon in *White Corridors*, Googie watched an operation. "She did not turn a hair," says her director

Googie relaxes between acts at the St. James's, where she plays an American in *Winter Journey*. She learned the accent from a record

tell me you'll let a little thing like an accent stop you."

She decided to take the part, and then in characteristic fashion began learning to talk like an American. To do this she got the co-operation of the play's American director, Sam Wanamaker. He got his wife, an American radio actress, to make a recording of the part. Googie locked herself up with the recording and did not come out until she was word perfect.

The same tenacity is also detectable in Googie's personal affairs. "I knew she was going to marry John McCallum," says one of her admirers, "the day I heard her say, 'I like just to be in the same room with that man, even if we don't talk.'"

Refused To Change Name

A woman who stands back and watches herself, Googie tempers her determined, hard-working streak with a sense of fun that matches her name. Googie was bestowed on her by her Indian nurse in Karachi. The word is not only Bengali for "clown," but also Punjabi for "dove," Tamil for "turning in the road" and Australian slang for "egg." Each version can be appropriate to the bearer. Googie accepts the "clown" translation and has resisted stubbornly all attempts to change it.

The first man to suggest that she should find another name was Buddy Bradley, a Soho dancing master, who took over her training when she was sixteen. "I was after her about that name for a long time," Bradley says. "Finally she came to me one day and said, 'Buddy, I've decided to change my name. Instead of Googie Withers, I want to be known as Googie Robertson.'"

A variation on this incident occurred when Googie signed her first film contract. A Continental director asked her to change her name and met with the usual refusal. "Googie I am and Googie I remain," she declared.

"Googie, I love," said the director, "but who will ever remember a name like Veezzairs?"

The prewar films Googie made were full of clowning. She earned laughs the hard way by appearing as a maid and falling over backwards with a tray of dishes. The beer vat episode with George Formby had almost tragic results. The script called for them to fall into a vat, but because beer foam is notoriously short lived, the director substituted fire extinguisher fluid. "There was about three feet of foam," Googie says, "and we nearly choked. Tony Kimmins, the director, had to dive in and rescue one of the cast who was almost overcome."

Googie's first contract for a series of films was given her by Douglas Fairbanks, jr., who now admits the error of his ways in typing her as a dumb blonde. "She was a fine giggler," Fairbanks says, "and she had a wonderful sense of fun. We were always pulling practical jokes on her." One of the jokes involved a trick chair wired up by Fairbanks. "They turned on the electricity and I shot three feet in the air," Googie recalls. "It wasn't funny at all."

Training in this school had its advantages, for when the war came and Googie went off to the Continent in the wake of the Allied armies, she was no longer credulous. In uniform, she sailed with the force which invaded Walcheren Island. After a five-week wait in Brussels, soon after its liberation, Googie and her party were ordered to proceed to Eindhoven, Holland.

Daughter of a Dutch mother, Googie speaks the language fluently. En route to Eindhoven in the back of a truck, Googie felt that the party was proceeding not north to Holland but east towards Hitler's Germany. She screamed at the driver to stop and offered to find out their location from a farmhouse.

"There didn't seem to be anyone about the place," Googie recalls, "so I knocked as hard as I could on the door. It opened just a crack and I asked in Dutch: 'Would you please tell me where we are?' A man's voice whispered the name of a village I'd never heard of, so I asked if we were on the right road to Eindhoven. The man demanded, 'Who are you?' I told him that I was an English actress, and asked, 'Where is the nearest British headquarters?' He just stared at me. Finally he explained that he didn't know where the British were—but the Germans were in the next field. He thought I'd come to liberate him!"

Instead, Googie beat a retreat. As their truck headed back in the direction from which they had come, a V2 soared into the sky from a Nazi launching platform not half a mile away. "And that," says Googie, "is how we almost opened a tour in a prisoner-of-war camp."

Legs Were A Problem

An early influence on Googie's career was the shape of her legs. "I had legs that were bandy," she says. "That meant I could become a cello player, or remain seated on a horse all the time so that people wouldn't notice." Her mother found the solution to the problem by sending Googie to a school to learn acrobatic dancing. The legs became impeccably straight and carried Googie into the chorus. At sixteen she was simultaneously one of Buddy Bradley's Rhythm Girls ("they dance with athletic accuracy") at the Strand Theatre and, later in the evening, one of the Ballyhoo Girls at the May Fair Hotel's midnight cabaret.

In true movie style, Googie's entrance into films came on the night she was promoted from the chorus to take the part of an actress who had fallen ill. A film producer was in the audience. He offered Googie a test, and at the age of seventeen her film career began.

At this time, Googie admits frankly, she missed some off-stage opportunities. There was a private view of Epstein flower paintings, at which she could have had her pick of the famous sculptor's work for £25. "I bought a dress instead," she says.

The significant part of this incident was not Googie's failure to buy a painting which has since soared in value; what is remarkable is the presence of a brash, blonde ex-chorus girl at an art show. Googie's serious side was beginning to show. One of the first people to notice it was the director, Michael Powell. He came to her in 1941 with a dramatic part in the film *One Of Our Aircraft Is Missing*. "Do you think you can do it?" he asked.

"Yes," said Googie, "that is, if you have confidence in me."

"Well, *I* think you can do it," the director replied, "but I don't mind telling you that nobody else agrees with me."

The Shrew—And A Proposal

One Of Our Aircraft Is Missing established the new Googie. "I could then choose between straight or comedy parts." She stuck to strong parts and started a series of five films. She met her future husband while making *The Loves Of Joanna Godden* (whence comes their daughter's name), and accepted his proposal of marriage at a performance of *The Taming Of The Shrew*. The engagement announcement was made shortly after they had shot *It Always Rains On Sunday*. In one scene from this film McCallum clamps his hand over Googie's mouth. The *Daily Herald* used a photograph of the incident to illustrate the news of the engagement and captioned the picture, "The happy couple are shown above."

The photograph was perhaps symbolic. One reason for the success of the match is that McCallum, in his own quiet way, can be just as determined as the girl who came up from the chorus. Not long ago the couple were visiting friends in London. When they arrived, McCallum apologized for having to leave early. Googie announced that she was not going. Later it was noticed that, while she was still saying she would not go, Mrs. McCallum was happily marching off with her husband. THE END

ENCOUNTER IN THE DARK

The boy had a gun. The blind man had only darkness as his ally—
that and the knowledge that the boy was frightened *by KEM BENNETT*

AS THE GLASS-CUTTER GRATED in a rough circle close to the window catch, the boy held his breath. It was very dark in the back garden of the big Victorian house. Part of his mind welcomed the concealing darkness; but another part feared it.

Presently he took a pistol from his belt. It was a German souvenir, smuggled home by his father early in 1945. When his mother later received a telegram, followed by a clumsy letter of condolence from his father's company commander, she buried the pistol in the garden. For her something buried was something dead. She had always hated the pistol, even when his father was alive. Not so the boy: he quickly resurrected the weapon before it could rust, and hid it carefully, wrapped in an oily rag and shining with the peculiar black cleanliness which identifies all greatly cherished firearms.

Before leaving home he had wound a length of insulating tape round the barrel of the Walther automatic. Now he unwound the tape and stuck it to the window, leaving a looped section dangling. He wrapped his handkerchief round the butt of the pistol and struck firmly at the centre of the circle he had inscribed. It gave. He stopped the plate of glass from falling inside by holding on to the loop of insulating tape. Thrusting a gloved hand through the hole in the window, he groped for the catch and released it.

He eased the window up, inch by inch, making a succession of small sounds no louder than the one he had made with his glass-cutter. Again he held his breath and, again, felt a terrible compulsion to look behind him. He yielded this time, glancing nervously over his shoulder. There was nobody—only the dim outlines of a shed, of the garden wall, and of two trees whose branches drooped over the wall into the narrow street beyond.

HE climbed delicately through the open window in front of him, feeling for obstructions, the irises of his eyes dilated by the need for penetrating a denser, indoor obscurity. Presently, he was inside the house, standing on the edge of a thick carpet. He pocketed the pistol and took out an electric torch.

An elated confidence lifted the boy as he played a narrow beam of light about the room. He savoured the fact that he had committed burglary. Until this moment he had never quite believed that he would dare. He had dared. His daring prompted him to remember the court and the words of the man sitting on the bench above him.

"I suppose you imagine that stealing a car and driving wildly through the streets of London is an heroic escapade?"

The boy clenched his teeth. Dry, contemptuous and wearied, the magistrate's voice was indelibly recorded in his memory. It had frightened him; and that he could not forgive. Even worse, it had questioned his courage: "I would impress upon you that you are wrong. It is only too simple to steal a car and drive dangerously. In doing what you have done, you

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"You're a very young burglar by your voice," the man said. "A fool as well as a criminal"

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

The Queen leaves her Daimler at Newton Abbot Station after visiting this year's Royal Agricultural Show. State cars do not bear number plates.

The car with a royal pedigree

by DENNIS HOLMAN

For half a century, monarchs have gone to Daimlers for their State cars—big, luxurious, and capable of crawling along at one m.p.h.

A BLACK-AND-GOLD limousine owned by Lady Docker, wife of the millionaire chairman of the group of companies which includes Daimler Motors, is the most luxurious car ever made. It was built originally to demonstrate British workmanship of the very highest skill using the finest materials available, and Osmond Rivers, the designer, was told to approach the job with only one thought in mind: it had to have everything—and everything had to be the best. Its price has never been disclosed, though estimates have touched £35,000.

Gold goes far below its surface. All the exterior fittings which are normally chromium plated are coated with gold. On the side panels are nearly 7,000 gold stars. Gold has been used for the beading that runs along the base of the body, and gold locks (opened by gold keys) protect the lockers in the cabinet work. One of these contains a solid-gold lady's companion, each article encrusted with Lady Docker's initial in diamonds; another is for the picnic hamper, with its opulent gold-on-silver vacuum flasks, sandwich boxes, cutlery and tea set of black-and-gold bone china; a third is a cocktail cabinet complete with gold cocktail shakers, cut-glass decanters and goblet-type glasses to match. In the boot are black crocodile leather suitcases with special gold fittings. All the interior cabinet work is in Australian camphor-wood veneer, the compartments being operated by press-button controls. A radio is built into the centre armrest of the rear seat, with twin loudspeakers for the front and rear concealed in the division. There are independently controlled heating and ventilating units for front and rear. The electrically operated windows are double-glazed to prevent misting on the inside in cold weather, and double-sealed to exclude draughts and dust.

Rivers claims: "The gold car is the summit of achievement of the two oldest-established specialists in luxury motoring." The specialists are Daimlers, who have supplied the Royal cars almost exclusively for fifty-two years, and Hoopers, the body builders, who have been building Royal coaches and cars since the reign of William IV.

When the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, bought his first car in the early summer of 1900, he decided to take a trip round Ascot. As the driver did not know the roads, a horse and groom were sent from the Royal stables at Windsor to ride in front of the car. The Prince looked critically at the horse. "Do you think that animal is up to it?" he asked. The groom's contempt for his master's noisy toy was immeasurable, but he merely said: "He'll do his best, sir." After a pause he added: "But I don't think he'll have to work too hard."

The party set off in great style, but they had not gone far before it was apparent that the car was too fast for the horse, and the Prince gave the order to stop. "Take him home to his stable," he told the disillusioned groom with a smile. "You'll need a horse with a lot more fire than that to keep up with a Daimler."

Edward VII owned more than a dozen Daimlers in his lifetime; and his successors have emulated him—indeed, until lately, only Daimler Motors built a car big enough for the use of Royalty on State occasions: the first "Double Six," produced in 1927, was nearly six yards long. But a preference for Daimlers has not been confined to the British Royal Family. In the last half century these cars have gone to many emperors, grand dukes and dictators.

Only recently a Daimler was sent to the King of Siam—a white car surmounted by a flagstaff tipped with a red light. A bullet-proof model was supplied to President Benes. Another, made for Farouk when he was King of Egypt, had interiors of walnut inlaid with ivory, with an ivory steering wheel. There were lockers for clothes, cabinets for drinks and cigarettes, and an umbrella case. Indian princes have also been good customers. One Daimler, built for a rajah in the days when cars were higher off the ground, was fitted with a lift to raise its portly owner to his seat without loss of dignity.

Shining Brass Fittings

Osmond Rivers, chief designer at Hoopers, has been building Royal cars for about thirty years. He remembers the enormous limousines of George V, the first monarch to use cars on State occasions. "You could stand upright in them," Rivers says. "All exterior fittings were of shining brass."

The King and Queen sat in large armchairs behind the partitioned-off driving seat, with any others who might be travelling with their Majesties sitting on seats behind them: it was Edward VIII who abolished, as far as motoring was concerned, the rule that no back may be turned on the King.

When the present Queen came to the throne she brought with her a Rolls-Royce she had used before her father's death. It was later sent to

The Queen's car carries her Standard and Arms

Rivers to be repainted and fitted out as a State car. The Queen's State cars bear no number plates. On the radiator is a Britannia mascot; at the fore edge of the roof stands a painted shield with the Royal Coat of Arms, with just behind it a flagstaff flying the Royal Standard, and one blue lamp above the windscreen for use at night. Painted as Royal carriages have been for centuries, the cars are a deep claret and black, with the mouldings picked out in vermilion.

No instance has ever been reported of a Daimler having stalled with distinguished passengers aboard on a State occasion, though such proceedings are often conducted at speeds down to about one mile an hour, over long distances. The mechanism which makes the cars particularly suitable for slow-moving regal processions, the fluid-flywheel transmission, introduced more than twenty years ago, was as much ahead of its time as perhaps the most sensational of Daimler's innovations—the Silent-Knight sleeve-valve engine, used originally to cut out the noise of the old poppet valves.

When the Silent-Knight first came out in 1909 it was attacked so bitterly that sales began dropping, and Daimlers invited the R.A.C. to submit their product to the stiffest tests. That the two Daimlers tested remained in perfect working order, after ten days of almost continuous running, is motoring history.

The firm actually made cars before they could lawfully be used on the roads. The founder of the original Daimler Motor Syndicate, registered in May, 1893, was Frederick Simms. Five years before, he had visited Bremen, in Germany, to exhibit an aerial cableway, but had lost interest in his own invention the moment he set eyes on a small internal-combustion motor fitted to a passenger trolley-car. The inventor was an engineer named Gottlieb Daimler, and his engine, Simms learned, had also been used to drive a launch, a form of bicycle, a pump for a fire engine—even a carriage with a tiller.

By 1890 Simms had secured control of the patent rights of the Daimler engine for the United Kingdom, parting with them to the syndicate he founded three years later for £3,000 in shares and £562 in cash. They began with a capital of £6,000 and a staff of three employed at fitting Daimler engines into boats in a workshop near Putney Bridge railway station. Despite Simms's efforts to popularize his launches with demonstrations on the Thames, business was practically negligible and, two years later, he thought he was doing brilliantly by persuading his colleagues to accept an offer of £35,000 for all their rights and assets.

The Daimler Motor Company was floated soon afterwards. The only director who had any idea at all of what went on inside their engine was the inventor himself, but Gottlieb Daimler was never known to attend a meeting. Fortunately, one of the directors succeeded in having J. S. Critchley appointed as works manager. It was he who took over a disused cotton-mill in Coventry and built up the nucleus of skill from which grew the immense Daimler organization of the last war, with its fifty dispersal factories that produced more than 60,000 aero engines, together with armoured cars and other war material valued at over £62,000,000.

Brakes Failed On Hill

In October, 1897, one of the Daimler directors, Henry Sturmey, and a mechanic completed the 929 miles from John O'Groats to Land's End in 93½ hours running time—an average of just under ten miles an hour. The journey was intended mainly as an advertising stunt. At every stop the pioneers distributed cards describing their "autocar."

"No, it can't explode—there is no boiler," the cards explained. "There are eight ways of stopping it, so it can't run away." Nobody was around to witness the time their brakes failed on a steep hill near Ambleside, in the Lake District. It was only because the road was straight and they came to a stop at the next slope that their adventure did not end ingloriously.

The early years of the century brought rapid changes in car design—traced from the succession of Daimlers supplied to the King: these got lower and longer, with the radiator in front of the engine instead of underneath, with hoods and canopies and the shape generally more like a car of today.

Inquiries were coming in from all over the world. The first Daimler ordered by the King of Siam, a seven-seater with revolving chairs in the tonneau, surmounted by a vast canopy from which hung decorated side screens, was so large that it could not be brought into the premises of the export company to be crated before dispatch. The work had to be done in the street.

Fans For Perfumed Air

Prejudice against "automobilism" in animal-loving England died hard, but the first World War swept what was left of it away, and Daimlers responded with a 1919 model sporting an electric starting and lighting set and a speedometer. That car, the last word in luxury, and costing £1,610, was the forerunner of Lady Docker's gold Daimler.

Designer Osmond Rivers has catered for the whims and caprices of the luxury motorist, from the potentate who required a concealed ivory toilet and fans to circulate scented air while driving through reeking bazaars, to the entirely masculine needs of the Duke of Gloucester, who orders cars furnished like a man's club with unadorned walnut and leather.

They are cars built to last and, to judge from the story told by a retired Indian Army colonel, they do. He and the late Kunwar Sahib Jasjit Singh used to play tennis and shoot together in the 1920s. "Whenever we went any distance Jasjit drove me in his Daimler," the colonel recalls. "I can see it now—bucket seats, bright red upholstery and brass acetylene headlamps.

"One day when we were out, Jasjit seemed rather preoccupied, replying in monosyllables, and keeping an eye on his instruments. When I asked if anything was wrong he smiled and said: 'Oh, no—on the contrary.' A few minutes later he stopped. 'Get out, Steve; this is a solemn moment,' he said. Then he did *puja* (an act of Hindu reverence) in front of his car, paying it compliments.

"As we got in again he said: 'She has done exactly a quarter of a million miles at this spot—and never a day's trouble!'" THE END

This was the first Royal Daimler—the Wagonette, made for King Edward VII. As Prince of Wales, Edward got archaic road laws revised

King Phumiphon of Siam drives in state through Bangkok. His Daimler has a flagstaff tipped with a red light visible from front and rear

He opened the gate, and started with surprise. She wondered if he would ever overcome his shyness. Suddenly he broke into a smile of admiration

The Far Country

by NEVIL SHUTE

She was falling in love—but was it with Australia or Carl?

JENNIFER MORTON HAD HELPED an unqualified doctor to amputate a man's leg. The man had died—and now, waiting for the inquest, she knew that they faced the possibility of serious police charges.

For the doctor, Carl Zlinter, things looked particularly black. A surgeon in his own country, Czechoslovakia, he could not practise in Australia without an Australian degree. As a D.P. immigrant, he had to complete two years' directed labour as a lumberman at Lamirra timber camp. If the inquest should go against him, he might be sent back to Europe.

Both he and Jennifer had come to Australia in search of freedom and a new life. Jennifer, a Leicester girl who had worked in London, came with £400 left her by her grandmother: she was staying with relatives, Jack and Jane Dorman, on their sheep farm at Leonora. Jane had outraged the family in 1919 by marrying Jack "below her station" and going off to Australia with him.

Wool was booming and the Dormans, after years of struggle, were rich. Jennifer was overwhelmed by the ease and friendliness she found. But it took time for New Australians, as the D.P.s were called, to be accepted, and Carl, though he loved the country, was lonely.

One day, while on a fishing trip, Carl was delighted and mystified to find the grave of a man with the same name and birthplace as his own. It was like meeting a friend, a link with his family. Who was Charlie Zlinter?

Over tea with the Dormans on the veranda at Leonora, he invited Jennifer to go with him to look for further traces of this man who had died in the gold rush fifty years ago.

Jennifer agreed. But that evening, after saying good night to him at the paddock gate, she walked back to the house thoughtfully. She was not sure whether the Dormans approved of Carl. She found them silent, as if they had been talking about her. Presently, Jane said: "I rather like Carl Zlinter."

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

PART 5
A Day With Carl

JENNIFER dropped down into a chair. "It's extraordinary," she said. "Carl's been in the country fifteen months, and this is the first time that he's been inside a private house."

Jane said slowly: "Well, I can understand that in a way, although it sounds rather awful. They're a pretty rough lot up at Lamirra. Before that camp started up, Jack and I used to go down sometimes to the hotel and have a glass of beer and chat with Mrs. Hawkey, the landlady, but we haven't been for a long time. Too many drunks."

"Of course, he's different from the ordinary

Continued on page 27

My life of fiddling and fooling (7) by **TED RAY**

Raising a laugh on the air

Kitty Bluett, Ted's radio wife, was a great find. But Sybil, his real wife, unwittingly provides the best gags in his famous show

Ted Ray and Kitty Bluett, the girl who plays his "wife" in *Ray's A Laugh*. When they first met, Kitty had just arrived from Australia; at first sight he knew she was right for the part

BEING A COMEDIAN in wartime was no joke. Quite rightly, we were expected to help people to see the funny side of things day and night, and besides my regular theatrical performances and camp concerts I spent a great deal of time visiting lonely sites, crossing to small islands where a few men were stationed, and giving 4 a.m. performances for factory night-workers.

I was appearing in Liverpool one night during the blitz. My mother had come to see me, together with a friend of mine named Wally Malcolm. We all went across the road for a drink, and soon I had to get back to the theatre. Malcolm said: "Leave your mother with me—I'll take care of her."

"Well, be careful," I said, "she doesn't drink very much, you know."

About an hour later my mum rolls in with Malcolm. He had been giving her Scotch, and she did not know where she was. But I blessed him for it in the end, because about half an hour later a raid started. We put my mother, who was by this time unconscious, into an old sleeping-bag in the corner of the room. She slept through the worst raid I ever experienced and did not know a thing about it.

It was not long after this that she died in Blackburn, where my sister had taken her to try to get her away from the raids. I was in Manchester. I went to see her in hospital and, although I did not know it then, it was for the last time. I could see that she was very ill, and I stayed as long as I could. In fact, when I left the hospital I realized that I had only just enough time to catch the train and get back in time for the show at the Palace, Manchester.

I got my train all right, but there was something wrong with the line outside Bolton and the train stopped. The minutes seemed like hours, and when eventually I looked out of the window, I could see that there was no chance of the blockage being removed. So I jumped out and ran along the track and eventually climbed up an embankment and got to the road. I dashed up to Bolton Station and saw a car

JOHN BULL COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

Ted and producer George Inns. George Wadmore (right) worked in a café and wrote gags in his spare time—till Ted said: "Stop cutting ham for sandwiches, and fill up scripts for this ham"

there. "Would you do me a big favour? Get me to the Palace, Manchester, as soon as you can. I'm terribly late," I told the driver.

He drove slowly along and I exhorted him to drive more furiously. "Come on, come on," I shouted.

"I can't, I've just had this car rebored," he replied.

"Never mind, you've got to get me there. I'll pay if I smash up your rebore."

Well, he got me there, but I had to pay all right. You should have heard the noise his car was making—like coal being poured into a coalhole.

I was broadcasting on and off fairly frequently during the war, putting over different versions of my stage act, and always trying to do a completely different routine each time. Then, in 1948, I became the resident comedian of *Henry Hall's Guest Night* for a season, and I got in touch with a young chap called George Wadmore, who had sent me gags now and then. He was cutting sandwiches in his father's café in Covent Garden and I told him: "Stop cutting ham for sandwiches and start filling up scripts for this ham." He's been doing it ever since.

The producer was a fellow called George Inns, and we got on together very well. We talked idly of working out a radio show together, and then, one day—I do not know how it came about—we suddenly found ourselves saying that a domestic sketch, a really, truly domestic sketch, had never been done on the air. There had been a lot of knockabout acts with people pasting things up on the walls, with the crashing of buckets and the falling of ladders and things like that, but they were not really true to sound, they were more visual. The spoken word is the thing that matters, and the mood—particularly the mood a person is in, if you can convey that. "Wouldn't it be a good idea if we could mirror the everyday lives of people?" I said.

But I could not do anything about it, for I had too many engagements booked, including a pantomime at the Hippodrome, Bristol. The theatre had been burned, and they had spent the whole of the previous year getting it ready for *Cinderella*. It opened on Christmas Eve, a nice new-paint job, and I was playing my favourite part of Buttons. The curtain came down on the first half to great applause, but, after the interval, when the curtain should have gone up, it went to a height of four feet—and stuck! Despite all the efforts of the stagehands and staff they could not move it. So who did they send for? Ray.

Ted with his two "wives": Sybil (on his right) and Kitty. When he asked Sybil if she liked the first broadcast of *Ray's A Laugh*, she said "No." She was right

Rehearsing with John Gielgud for his successful appearance in Evelyn Waugh's *Helena* on the Third Programme. Ted's later comment: "I'll stick to Buttons"

Stagehands With Ropes

I went out in my Buttons costume and stood there for twenty-five minutes telling them every story I could possibly think of while the stagehands at the back worked feverishly. Two of them came out with a rope. I said: "Blimey, you're not going to hang me just for telling these jokes, are you?" They were trying to loop the ropes round each side of the tableau curtains and pull them back. They eventually managed to do this and the pantomime went on. An unexpected event like that took the reports of the first night from the middle pages of the newspapers to the front page, and the result was wonderful business for the entire run.

I used to go home at weekends and, getting out of the train one Monday at Temple Meads Station, I saw George Inns on the platform. With him was a pretty girl. "This young woman has just arrived from Australia," he said. "She came to the B.B.C. to be auditioned and I thought she might play the part of your radio wife." It was Kitty Bluett. Right away I could sense a warmth and feeling and understanding in this girl, which was to be more than justified when my show eventually took the air. Inns had brought her to see the pantomime to give her an idea of how I worked. When the pantomime season closed I came back to London myself to have a shot at my own radio show.

We needed a name for it. I wanted to call it *Everything's Under Control*, because everything was "controlled" in those days, but George Inns pointed out that this might date quickly. Some people suggested *Hip-Hip-Hoo-Ray!* others *Hoo-Ray For Fun!* but neither of these seemed to hit the mark. I was telling Sidney Smith, the manager of the pantomime about it, on a late night drive from Bristol, and he said quite casually: "What about *Ray's A Laugh?*" It was perfect.

The show first went on the air in April, 1949. I was full of high hopes for it. It started with some gags from me, then we did a burlesque of some aspect of controls, then came the domestic spot, and then some singing. We made the recording and I hoped for the best.

Sybil's Verdict On Show

On the night it was broadcast, I went out to a boxing match. When I came home, Sybil was in the kitchen. "Did you hear the programme?" I asked her.

"Yes," she said.

"What did you think of it?"

"No," said Sybil—and she was right, of course. I knew in my heart that the show was not good enough, and we had a terrible time until we found our error. The balance was wrong. The domestic spot, the linch-pin of *Ray's A Laugh*, had to go bang in the middle, because everything must revolve round it. We did it that way and it sounded much better.

That first edition ran for sixty-five weeks non-stop, and we have done two more long editions since. We average about 7,000,000 listeners to our first performance, on the Home Service—which is not the popular one for comedy shows—and a further 8,500,000 for our Friday repeat. So, in all, 15,500,000 people listen to us every week. That's a lot of people: almost as many as are waiting for new cars.

The domestic spot gives the three of us who

Andrew and his mother listen as Robin plays—and Ted fiddles. "There is more fun in everyday life than you can find in all the gag books," he says

write the script—Eddie Maguire, George Wadmore and me—the most fun. A lot of situations come from real life. For instance, some time ago my real wife, Sybil, bought some chimes to take the place of the front door bell—and she was very proud of them. Unfortunately, she had them fixed in a spot which meant that the only place you could hear them was when you were having a bath. It was rather annoying to be up to your neck in hot water and suddenly to hear the bells going. You had to get out and dry yourself and then rush downstairs to tell somebody to answer the front door. We adapted that for the show.

Then there was the time when we left a pound note in the empty milk bottle on the doorstep with a note for the milkman. When I came down the following morning I found a copy of *Old Moore's Almanac,* with the words written on it: "Thanks very much for the pound. Have this with me." There will be no more pound notes left in milk bottles on my doorstep, but these episodes give you ideas. This one was worth a pound.

On the air we developed it this way. We said, "Ted has got to go out to work the following morning and he has no change for the bus. The bus conductor is a short-tempered man who gets annoyed even when you offer him two shillings for a threepenny fare, so Ted asks Kitty how he can possibly get some coppers. She says, 'Well, look, I haven't paid the milkman this week. You leave a pound note in the milk bottle and tomorrow morning he'll leave the change. You will then take the change and I'll make the money up to you when you come home.' Ted gets up in the morning, finds a bag of lavender and a note saying, 'Thank you very much. This is the first money I've earned since I got the sack. I used to be a bus conductor but was thrown off for insulting the passengers.'"

And there was the time when Sybil said to me: "We want a new refrigerator. You can sell our old one—they're getting tremendous prices for second-hand fridges." I fell for this and bought the new model. Then I found I could not sell the old one. Now, I'm left with two refrigerators.

There is more fun in everyday life than you can find in all the gag books. You just cannot beat the real thing, especially if it has got that common family denominator. I like to feel when Kitty and I are doing one of our sketches that all over the country married couples are looking at each other and saying: "But, darling, that's exactly what happened to us the other day!"

She Asked Me For £500

To judge from the letters I get each week, we do manage to hit the bull's-eye now and again. One I had the other week said: "Please, Mr. Ray, buy Kitty the television set you keep refusing her, because my husband has promised me a brand-new summer frock when you do."

Another letter, from a woman in Derbyshire, began: "You have such a nice voice and you sound such a nice man. . . ." I thought, that's rather gratifying—until I read on: ". . . and so do you think you could lend me £500 to replenish the stock of my decorating business? I can't promise to pay it back as things are very bad, but you sound such a nice man, I am sure you wouldn't mind risking £500 in a venture of this sort."

But I have made many pen-friends, and the most moving letter of all was from a mother who said that her daughter was a great follower of *Ray's A Laugh* and used to listen every Thursday. The girl was incurably ill and the time came for her to go to hospital for the last time, without any hope of coming out again. The ambulance was waiting at the door, and the girl said: "Mother, can I just listen to *Ray's A Laugh* before I go?"

They let her listen and two days later she died. Her mother wrote to say: "I'd like you to know that you made her last moments very happy."

Some of our catch-phrases seem to have caught the public's fancy, too—like Ivy's famous phrase: "'E's luvly, Mrs. Hoskin! 'E's luvly!" I remember being at Harringay arena one night watching some fights. The M.C. introduced John Wayne, the famous film star, and he climbed through the ropes. He was immaculately dressed in Western clothes, big white sombrero and flowing tie, and the announcer handed him the mike to make a little speech.

But before he could get a word out, some wag at the back shouted out: "'E's luvly!" And poor John Wayne's remarks were drowned in a wave of laughter. I was accused of having planted that man, but I can assure you I did not.

We try to draw our characters from real life, so that they will seem merely enlargements of familiar types, not complete inventions. The original "Soppy" was a paper boy who used to deliver at the home of Peter Sellers. Ivy and Mrs. Hoskin had not only real-life counterparts, but they were really called Ivy and Mrs. Hoskin. We had met them at the hotel where we stayed in Morecambe, and it was Sybil's idea

WHITER TEETH FROM SCHOOLGIRL DAYS

Did you MACLEAN your teeth today?

During the past three years I have won many beauty contests. I have used Macleans for the last ten years, and I am sure that it has given me my winning smile

Miss M. O'N.
(Palmers Green)

MACLEANS
Peroxide Tooth Paste
makes teeth WHITER
IN THREE SIZES: 1/3, 1/8 AND 2/6

He'll love that Silken Sheen!

THE SMILE on your lips . . . the shine of your hair—these are the things he'll remember. Give *your* hair a gleam soft as candlelight, a heart-catching silkiness. 'Vaseline' Brand Soapless Shampoo leaves hair radiantly clean—because it rinses out completely. . . . The smile on your lips? That comes when you meet his admiring look!

Vaseline* SOAPLESS SHAMPOO
Price 5d. including tax.
Makes your hair clean—gives it silken sheen

4211-4

* "Vaseline" is the registered trade mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co. Ltd.

that they might make good radio characters. I wrote asking their permission, which they kindly gave us, and they listened every Thursday to hear Bob Pearson and me impersonate them on the air.

As for our latest success, "Dear old Dad," I met him outside the Aeolian Hall, in Bond Street, where the B.B.C. Variety Department is based. One day Eddie Maguire, George Wadmore and I were talking as we left the building. Suddenly an old chap came up to me and said: "Have you got such a thing as a match, son?" I handed him a box of matches.

"A match isn't much good without a cigarette, is it?" he said, giving me an old-fashioned look. I gave him a cigarette. He lit it and put my box of matches into his pocket. "Well, son," he went on, "things are getting pretty bad all the way round, aren't they?" I could see quite plainly that there was not a great future in this conversation and we bade the old man a brusque farewell.

We had been talking about a possible "Dad" character and this meeting seemed an omen. There was now no doubt in our minds, "Dad" would have to be one of our permanent characters. I turned to the boys and said: "Well—if characters like that really exist, they *must* be right!"

Although we have an audience in the studio to keep us on our toes, I always try to make sure that the radio audience can "see" all the jokes. Once, in *Music Hall*, I almost committed the sin of so many comedians, playing to the people who could see me instead of to the microphone. I was compèring, and Anne Ziegler and Webster Booth were finishing their act. As they finished, Anne spontaneously turned round and kissed me on the cheek. I put my hand to my cheek and showed the audience the lipstick and said: "She bit me, I'm bleeding!"

Then I realized that the listeners would not understand it. So I quickly said: "But how nice to be kissed by Anne Ziegler." To make sure: "Well, never mind, it's lipstick, but I can always tell the wife it's beetroot." That made it a sound gag instead of a visual gag, and it took some quick thinking.

Although I had done pretty well in radio, it never occurred to me that I should get the accolade of acting in the Third Programme. It happened because Christopher Sykes, a drama producer, was relaxing by listening to *Ray's A Laugh* and he heard me doing one of the characterizations I did at the end of the show. "How would you like to play the part of the Wandering Jew in Evelyn Waugh's *Helena*?" he asked me.

I'll try anything once, and I played the part as a quick-talking salesman type. The distinguished actors Flora Robson, Isabel Jeans and John Gielgud, who were also in the cast, paid me the compliment of going into the control-room to listen to me while I said my piece, instead of lounging about the studio. And a few days later, Evelyn Waugh himself wrote to me saying: "My heartiest congratulations on your magnificent interpretation."

But I have no ambition to play Hamlet. I'll stick to Buttons. And that is a poignant, dramatic part, too, as the little girl will tell you who wrote to me after one performance, saying: "I was so sorry when Cinderella chose the prince. I thought you were much nicer."

NEXT WEEK: Ted Ray and son meet the Royal Family

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

THIS is me at the age of thirteen, on a picture postcard taken in my native Paris. Today I'm not sure what I am looking so surprised about: something to do with the young lady's birthday, no doubt.

I had just launched myself on my singing career and posed for these pictures to make some more money for my mother.

My father had left us after several days of continual drunkenness and pitiful scenes. A little later, my elder brother followed him out of the house for ever: he had found a girl to marry and no longer wanted the burden of looking after my mother, younger brother and me.

At first I tried to become an acrobat, but after endless falls and bruisings I had to give up that idea, and turned to singing instead. I was only ten when I first tried to sing professionally, and the audience just laughed and mocked at me. The reason was that I was singing three keys higher than the accompaniment. I didn't know about such things as keys!

So I had to earn my living some other way. First I was a metal engraver, then a carpenter, then a doll painter, then a paint merchant's clerk. But I was quickly sacked from each job: I was giving only a little of my attention to the work—the rest of me was in front of an audience, singing and making them laugh sympathetic laughter.

Finally I settled down as a maker of drawing pins, moulding tacks with a handpress. But even here my attention wandered, and soon I had completely crushed my thumb.

At last, a famous comedian heard me singing for nothing at a concert and offered me a job, and slowly I was able to clamber up the ladder.

When I was in my teens, I had my first lesson about women. It was at one of the bars where I sang.

I had noticed a brunette always with an old man. Once, however, she was alone and invited me to dinner, and afterwards taught me about kissing. Next day, the old man came to me and said he had heard we had dined together. I thought I would do him a good turn. "Mademoiselle doesn't love you," I explained.

Later, the girl came up to me, and instead of being loving, she was violently angry. "I've lost him, and it's all your fault!" she screamed. And she was never nice to me again.

Today he is a singer and actor. ***For his name turn to page 31***

ONE OF OUR SUBMARINES

Continued from page 9

and I'll have another shot at opening this one." This time he managed without much effort to lift the hatch slightly off its seat, allowing a trickle of water to come through.

"O.K." said Peter. "Well, boys, take your time. There's no hurry. You say when you feel you're ready."

I said I was for having a go at once, before we weakened ourselves further by breathing foul air, and the others agreed. We stripped off down to vest, pants and socks.

"Ready?" asked Peter.

"Ready," we all replied, though I think the E.R.A. had reached the point in his sickness where he wanted to die more than anything else.

"Right. Stand by," said Peter cheerfully. "Here we go for fourteen days' survivor's leave. We're off!"—and he pushed up the lid.

I took as deep a breath as I could, and then the sea crashed in on us. There was a roaring in my ears, a blackness everywhere, and there was nothing for it but to fight for life with all one's primitive instinct for survival. Hauling myself up by the rungs of the ladder, I found my head obstructed by the A.B.'s bottom. With the strength of a desperate man I pushed up at him, his heel struck me in the face, I pushed again, and then we were through the hatch and clear of the submarine.

I swam upwards with quick, jerky breast-strokes. It seemed a terrible distance. Time stretched out of its normal span until I thought my lungs must surely crack.

And then suddenly I was there, coughing, spluttering, gasping in great draughts of the sweet night air and drinking in the blessed sight of the stars shining in the immensity of space.

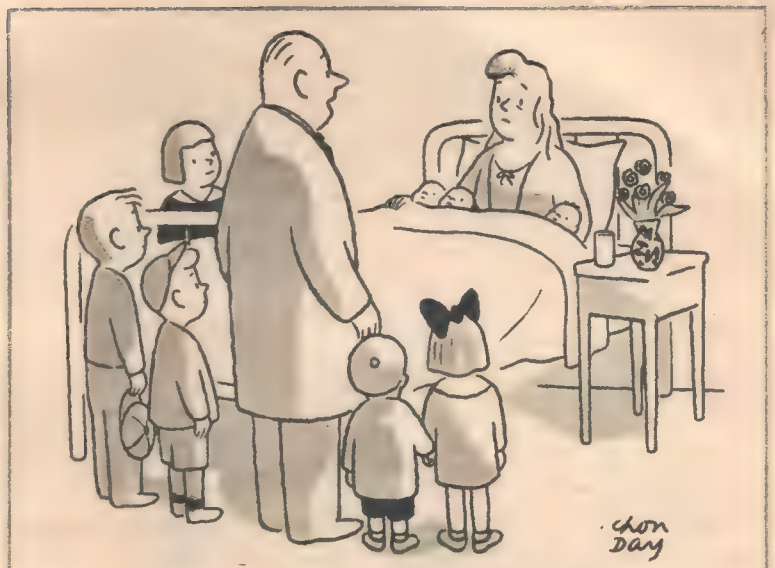
We Shouted For Help

The sea was fairly calm, with no more than a gentle popple. Seeing two heads in the water not far away, I called out and found they were Peter and the A.B., both in good heart. Of the E.R.A. there was no sign. We could make out the dark shapes of several ships around us, so we began shouting to attract attention. Some of them were throwing searchlights on the water, and one of these seemed to me nearer than the rest.

"Come on," I said, "let's swim to that nearest one," and began swimming towards it with my rather feeble side-stroke. I pressed on for a few minutes, imagining the other two were following me, but after a while I turned and could see no sign of them, although I heard them shouting at intervals not far off.

The vessel I was making for was farther away than I had thought. I am not a strong swimmer, so I turned over on to my back and relaxed into an easy backward leg-stroke, calling "Help!" at the top of my voice from time to time. Sometimes a wave slopped over my head and I swallowed a little more water. I seemed to be swimming for a long time. Whenever I looked around, the ship seemed to be as far away as ever. I began to feel rather exhausted.

Suddenly I heard voices shouting, the churning of propellers going astern, and I turned to find a searchlight blazing in my eyes and below it the shape of a motor launch quite close, with a scrambling-net down over the side and men running along the deck. A heaving line shot out, I grabbed it and was hauled in. A sailor clambered down the net and helped me on to the deck, where I fell into the arms of two R.N.V.R. officers.



"Looks as if we've got the problem of a lonely old age well under control, dear"

Exhausted and groaning for breath, with my lungs half full of seawater, I must have appeared in a worse state than I was, but while they wrapped me in blankets and hustled me below I managed to tell them that there were more of us out there in the water and others still down in the submarine trying to escape from the engine-room.

In the cabin below they rubbed me down, gave me dry clothes, and put me into a bunk, where I lay shivering from delayed shock. About half an hour later they came and told me our men were starting to come up from the bottom. I couldn't bear to stay in my bunk, so I wrapped myself in a blanket and tottered along to find out what the situation was.

Like Martian Creatures

The men from *Umpire* were coming up at fairly frequent intervals, strange Martian creatures with their Davis escape apparatus goggles and oxygen bags, and rendered almost unrecognizable by black oil which had floated up from the bilges when they flooded the engine-room for the escape. But they were in extraordinarily good spirits, half intoxicated with their unexpected return to life.

Every one of them was full of praise for the way in which the chief E.R.A. and the torpedo gunner's mate had organized the escaping party and carried out the escape drill. When finally these two reached the surface, the chief E.R.A. last of all, they reported there was no one left in the engine-room. There had been enough Davis escape apparatus sets for all but two of the party. Two men had volunteered to go up without them, each holding on to the legs of one of the others; one of these was never seen again.

A final roll-call showed that the only other casualty of the engine-room party of twenty was a civilian technician from Chatham dockyard, who had joined *Umpire* as passenger for the trip north: the chief E.R.A. and the T.G.M. had fitted him with a Davis set and patiently explained its simple operation to him several times, but the man was so unnerved by the catastrophe that, although he succeeded in getting out through the hatch, he failed to reach the surface. But altogether the engine-room escape was a remarkable justification of submarine escape drill.

Man Who Went Back

I discovered afterwards that, halfway through the escape, the chief E.R.A. thought it would be advisable to make sure none of the escapers was getting caught up in any obstruction outside the hatch. He therefore clipped on the oxygen mouthpiece of his Davis set, made his way up through the hatch, walked about on the outside casing of the submarine in the vicinity of the hatch, and then, although he could easily and without shame have made his ascent to safety, he climbed down through the hatch into the engine-room once more and carried on with the business of supervising the escape of the remaining men.

Not until every other man had left the compartment did he make his own getaway. For his part in the escape Chief Engine Room Artificer Killen was awarded the British Empire Medal.

It was not until the M.L. landed us at Yarmouth that I heard Peter Bannister was missing. I had been told that another vessel had rescued some survivors from the water, and I had assumed these were Peter and the A.B. who had been with us. In fact only the A.B. had been picked up. When I saw him later at Yarmouth, he said that he and Peter had swum together for some time and that when they were rescued he had thought Peter was immediately behind. A long search failed to find him.

I was staggered by this news, for Peter was a strong swimmer and had seemed in excellent fettle when we spoke together on the surface. To have got so far and be lost at the last moment was an appalling tragedy.

It was daylight when we reached Yarmouth and were met by Lieutenant-Commander J. F. B. Brown, who had flown up from submarine headquarters in London to get the facts at first hand. During the day, in the intervals of answering questions, we enjoyed the generous hospitality of the naval base.

That evening I strolled alone after dinner in a small grassy courtyard. A gentle drizzle of rain was falling, and it was what one would call a miserable evening, but to me the sound of soft rain falling like a benediction on the living grass seemed inexpressibly sad and sweet, and life itself so desirable that I could not imagine myself ever again being dissatisfied with it. For the first time I knew the delirious joy of not being dead.

But there was the problem of the future. At first I was sure that I never wanted to see the inside of a submarine again. Then the conviction grew in me that to ask to leave the submarine service would be such an admission of defeat that I should never recover my self-respect. For the purely egoistic reason of patching up my pride, I therefore decided to remain in submarines—if I was allowed to. On the principle of immediately remounting the horse that has thrown you, I resolved to ask to be sent on an operational patrol as soon as possible.

Half Had Been Lost

With thoughts like these crowding my brain, I was still awake when Wingfield walked into my cabin round about midnight. He had just landed, having stayed on the scene of the collision until nightfall. He was looking ten years older, grey and haggard from worry and lack of sleep. He told me how Tony Godden had been drowned, and asked about Peter Bannister. I told him the story up to the point where we had separated after reaching the surface. He said the final casualty total was two officers and twenty men, almost half the ship's complement.

The next day, after further interrogation, they sent us off on fourteen days' leave. In the middle of it we were recalled to attend the official board of inquiry at Chatham, a dreary and gruelling experience. The Admiralty apparently did not attach too much blame to Wingfield, for he was given another command soon afterwards and remained in command of operational submarines until the end of 1944, winning a D.S.O. and two D.S.C.s.

At the end of my leave I reported to H.M.S. *Dolphin* at Gosport, and in answer to my request for an early return to sea I was appointed as torpedo officer of the submarine *Sealion*, then based on Fort Blockhouse and operating off the French coast under the command of the famous bearded Ben Bryant.

NEXT WEEK: A secret mission—then off to Russia on Arctic Patrol

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THIEF OF TIME

Continued from page 10

weren't quite so vegetarian, but, of course, it was understood that Cecilia helped Mr. Rickaby only because of her deep though hitherto unsuspected interest in higher mathematics.

I should never have guessed that anyone *minded*, had not my father one day made a joke about turning me into a lady-secretary, too. My mother emitted a little wail of dismay, and impulsively unbraided my nearest pigtail to see if there were any sign of curl.

"Mary will marry!" she cried—but with more defiance than conviction.

"Cecilia was no plainer at the same age," observed my father.

"The Marlowes never had a penny to buy her a decent dress!" cried my mother—and hastily checked herself, because one never discussed money, especially before children. "*I* consider Cecilia extremely distinguished. And I hope we shall all be even nicer to her than usual, and certainly not make silly jokes—because I really don't know how the Marlowes can bear it," she went on uncontrollably, "seeing Cecilia go out every morning to *work for her living*!"

Of course, I saw then how awful it was.

At the same time, I decided that I would work on a farm. This prospect didn't distress me at all, and I began to eat even more than usual, to get very strong.

When people observed, as about this time they frequently did, that I ate "like a ploughboy," I felt a secret triumph; my good mother was openly chagrined.

* * *

It is always hard to estimate the length of child-time, but I believe that the scene of my crime had been set for at least a year before I committed it. Mr. Rickaby had been among us that while, and I cannot think he went without his exercise for long.

He was a man of most regular habits and firmly believed that his health required a two-mile walk each day; but though on the face of it nothing could have been simpler—our neighbourhood abounded in walks, and we children could have shown him at least three, the Pig Walk, the Boghole Walk, the Dangerous Stile Walk, all the right length—the very attractions such names defined were to Mr. Rickaby positive drawbacks. He did not wish to dodge sows, leap bogs or negotiate stiles. While walking he liked to think. He disliked even opening gates—which he usually forgot to shut—or having to watch out for the sparse traffic of our main road.

In Cambridge he used to walk round and round a quadrangle. His cottage garden was so small that it made him dizzy. So he finally asked my parents if he might use our pasture.

I think my parents were rather flattered. Mr. Rickaby, they impressed on us—we had a tendency to refer to him as Old Mouser, from a fancied resemblance to a departed cat—Mr. Rickaby was a very distinguished person, who published books and contributed to learned periodicals. They readily offered our pasture; and thus it

happened that any morning between nine and ten o'clock a furtive glance from the schoolroom window showed Mr. Rickaby marching round and round exactly like a clockwork toy. It was my father who suggested an hour when we children were necessarily indoors; in holiday time he put the pasture out of bounds for the same period. This did not, of course, prevent us from keeping an eye on Mr. Rickaby, all the same.

He had one fascinating idiosyncrasy. Our pasture was about half a mile round: Mr. Rickaby had, therefore, to circumambulate it four times. By way of keeping count, each time he passed the gate he picked up a pebble from the path outside and placed it upon the flat rail; when there were three pebbles in a row and he held the fourth poised in his hand he dashed all to the ground and went home.

It always used to astonish us to see him quite obviously pause to check them, one, two, three, whereas *we* could have taken in the number at a glance, *en passant*. But Mr. Rickaby, we were told, was a *higher* mathematician, not the low sort like ourselves, an explanation we endeavoured to accept.

HE never entered the house, except on the first Wednesday of each month, when our parents invited him to dinner. (He used to fall asleep immediately after the coffee, and my mother would awaken him at the right time by playing very loudly on the piano.) But though he thus remained essentially a stranger, we children were on the whole fond of Mr. Rickaby, as we were fond of the old lawnmower pony, and I had certainly no wish to do him harm.

Indeed, I well remember, that second summer, feeling unusually sympathetic to him, because he was under a cloud, as I often was myself. The root of Mr. Rickaby's disgrace, however, was not appetite or argumentativeness, but simply his fame. If he hadn't been so famous, he would never have drawn Mr. Demetrios to our village.

What a summer that was!—Mr. Demetrios was so appalling that memory pauses, fascinated, at the very name.

I cannot honestly say I remember anything personally very dreadful about him: I see him fifty-ish, small, brown-skinned, with very dark, rather melancholy eyes. He was perfectly clean and spoke English with only a slight American accent. His manners, in intention at least, were good. He still appalled us.

In the first place, Mr. Demetrios was a Greek, which was bad enough; in the second, he was vulgarly rich. (It got about that he had made his money in New York, in a place called Wall Street. My father always referred to him as The Financier.) And besides being a very rich Greek, Mr. Demetrios acted like one.

He wore an overcoat with a fur collar, and a diamond ring.

At the Crown, our only inn, he occupied a bedroom *and* a sitting-room, where he took his meals.

He hired an automobile, with chauffeur, to drive about the country.

He drank wine not only at dinner, but also at lunch.

He gave a hundred guineas to the church restoration fund, when even Sir Percival—at the Manor—gave only ten.

Of course, no one took any notice of him.

To the general credit, Mr. Rickaby was never accused of having Mr. Demetrios for a *friend*. The village was in general agreement that Mr. Rickaby would never have brought Mr. Demetrios among us had he known what Mr. Demetrios was like. But he had nonetheless *attracted* Mr. Demetrios, and having done so—hence the cloud—actually tolerated him.

Today I appreciate Mr. Demetrios better. He was an enthusiast. He was a man in prey to a passion—for higher mathematics. Other millionaires—he was one—accumulated pictures and statuary, to perpetuate, in museums, their names and wealth. Mr. Demetrios accumulated a narrow sheaf—just sufficient, in the end, to fill a narrow book—of mathematical fact. He had come all the way from Greece—or America, no one bothered to find out which—to sit at the feet of Mr. Rickaby. Enormous investments were going hang, tremendous deals were being botched, while he sat, day after day, in Mr. Rickaby's cottage, drinking in from the fountain-head a thin stream of commercially unproductive lore.

The village saw nothing of this. The village, though it already took a certain pride in Mr. Rickaby's fame, turned an icy shoulder to his disciple.

I regret to say that we children at once conformed to the prevailing weather. I remember myself once encountering Mr. Demetrios on the green, as he walked from the Crown to Mr. Rickaby's cottage. He tried to engage my goodwill by offering me a peach. I recognized the fruit immediately—out of Sir Percival's greenhouse, the most expensive single items at a recent church bazaar. We had allowed Mr. Demetrios to buy the whole basket. We had *expected* him to buy the whole basket. Sir Percival had sent a whole basket for Mr. Demetrios to buy. But, of course, I said thank you so much and turned on my heel with a fair imitation of my mother's best putting-off air. Today I can admire Mr. Demetrios; even at the time I felt sorry for Mr. Rickaby. I still conformed.

For Mr. Rickaby should naturally have sent this outlandish disciple packing. He didn't, because he enjoyed talking higher mathematics to someone who could understand him. The village thought it extremely selfish. Had my crime become public property I should have had the village on my side. . . .

WHY I was loose that fine September morning I cannot now quite recall. We did lessons again in September, and nine to ten o'clock was always Latin with the curate. Had I been arguing with the curate? It seems only too possible: I was a very argumentative child. Perhaps he had sent me out of the room: he was very young and painfully unresourceful in the matter of punishments. However, there I was, pounding down the lane—pigtails flying, still in my house shoes—towards the big hawthorn brake that was always our first base. I had no notion then of making for the pasture: the hawthorns simply happened to neighbour its gate.

Under their friendly, thorny arms I paused for breath and looked about. On the other side of the pasture I saw Mr. Rickaby—in his long black coat, diminished by distance, moving with his jerky stride, precisely the clockwork figure in the bottom of my last Christmas stocking. At that moment I felt even fonder than usual of him. The moment after, my eye fell on the three smooth pebbles lying on top of the rail. Without the slightest premeditation, I slipped the largest into my pocket and nipped back behind the hawthorns.

Mr. Rickaby approached, counted, added another pebble to the row and clockworked on. I waited until he had turned the first corner and then strolled over to the stable to talk to my pony. I felt rather pleased with myself.

But not for long. Not, alas, for long! How clearly I recapture the moment when remorse first struck! It smelt of warm flannel. I was standing at the nursery door, taking a look at my baby sister; and there, directly opposite, over the fireplace, hung a gaily illumined text. *" Lost—one golden hour, studded with sixty diamond minutes. No reward offered, for it is GONE FOR EVER!"*

I must have contemplated that text a thousand times. It came into the family with Old Ellen, who nursed my eldest brother. We children had all grown up with it. We had used its ominous words for counting-out games. We knew them, and forgot them, as one knows and forgets the words of a bedtime prayer. Now they struck me with the force of a thunderbolt. Fifteen minutes—fifteen precious diamond minutes—had I stolen from Mr. Rickaby; my heart turned over with an unpleasant thump; I recognized the symptom at once. Remorse was settling in my stomach like a lump of cold suet pudding, and I knew from experience that until I got rid of it I should feel no healthy appetite. I did, therefore, what I always used to do in emergencies: I told the boys.

For once they were no help at all. They regarded the whole thing as a good joke: I'd marched Old Mouser all round the pasture again, and the silly juggins hadn't even noticed. I regret to say that for some minutes I encouraged them. For some minutes I preened in their rare admiration of me. But for no longer. Remorse revived.

"Suppose," I said, "Mr. Rickaby was expecting some frightfully important visitor, and hadn't been there to meet him and he'd gone away again?"

"We'd have heard," said my brother George.

"Well, suppose the postman came with some frightfully important parcel?"

"He'd have left it next door," said my brother Arthur.

"Then suppose," I cried desperately, "Mr. Rickaby had been *thinking* of something—and didn't get home in time to write it down?"

"If anyone wants to come ratting," said my brother John, "it's six o'clock in the barn. . . ."

So *they* were no help to me. I was left to expiate my crime alone. . . .

The worst part about stealing *time* is that it is so hard to give back.

On the surface, Mr. Rickaby hadn't suffered at all. No important visitor, no important parcel, nothing of importance at all, so far as the village knew, had gone astray. Mr. Demetrios never arrived at the cottage until eleven, so even he hadn't been kept waiting. Nor had the cottage caught fire. It seemed as though no quarter of an hour since the creation could have been stolen with less ill effect. My conscience still plagued me.

We under-estimate—at least we under-estimated *then*, for these days of psycho-analysis I cannot speak—the dreadful force of a child's sense of guilt. I had done wrong, I was a thief; my appetite deserted me, I woke at least once, howling, in the night; and though it is true that this was after I had just picked at some cold goose, it is also literally true that I knew no easy moment for the next three weeks.

DURING that time, as a criminal haunts the scene of his crime, I haunted the proximity of Mr. Rickaby. I dogged him about the village green. I peered each morning through his cottage window, as he discoursed within to Mr. Demetrios, Miss Marlowe between them taking notes. Not one of the trio ever noticed me; I slunk disconsolately off. On the first Wednesday of the next month, I crept out of bed and stole nightgowned downstairs to listen at the dining-room door.

The ladies I knew to be already in the drawing-room: I had already marked their gentle swishing up and down stairs. (Does any child today, I wonder, recognize that soft, murmurous passage?) Around the broad mahogany, drinking port, only my father and Mr. Rickaby, Sir Percival and the vicar still lingered. The door was not quite shut; its lock, in 200 years, had never been put right. I applied my ear to the crack and frankly eavesdropped. The result was highly rewarding.

Mr. Rickaby, who, of course, hadn't yet gone to sleep, was talking to my father about young barbarians. Today I guess that he referred to myself and my brothers; at the time I took him literally, and conjured up a rather pleasing picture of prehistoric boy scouts. I was interested. But Mr. Rickaby did not elaborate: suddenly breaking off—"After all," he added nostalgically, "they *are* the best days. I'd give a great deal, sir, for another hour as a lad. . . ."

A chair was thrust back, they were coming out; I scrambled upstairs again. But with what a spring of hope! For now I at least knew of something Mr. Rickaby wanted. I might not be able to give him a whole hour—indeed, I didn't owe him a whole hour—but for some

"That's funny. I've got an odd sort of feeling that we've been here before"

KIA-ORA the fruit squash

ORANGE, LEMON, LIME, GRAPEFRUIT & LEMON BARLEY, 3/-
CHILDREN'S ORANGE SQUASH *with extra vitamins* 1/11d. half-bottle

fifteen minutes, as far as lay within my power, I determined he should enjoy every pleasure my brothers knew. I wasn't yet quite clear how to set about it, but at least I had an aim.

As things turned out, opportunity beckoned the very next day. Precisely at eleven o'clock—for the church clock was striking—I happened to emerge from our gate just as Mr. Rickaby crossed the green on his way from the post office to his cottage. I should say that our rural and picturesque green was bordered on one side by the beech hedge of the Manor House: by ducking through a gap we children knew of, and had, indeed, made, it was a matter of seconds only before one reached—by nipping across a corner of lawn—the Manor woods. They were my brothers' happiest hunting-grounds.

Mr. Rickaby and myself stood within a stone's throw of them.

As an embarrassment of riches, it was my day to have the pony. I could saddle him in two minutes, timed by John.

The first thing, however, was obviously to corral Mr. Rickaby. I pounded across the grass and placed myself in his path. He stopped at once, dropping two packages of books and a small loaf.

"Mr. Rickaby," I panted, "would you like a ride on my pony?"

WITH an obvious effort, Mr. Rickaby withdrew his thoughts from their native intellectual uplands and looked at me in such surprise that I felt, perhaps mistakenly, a need to elaborate.

"I share him with George, but it's Thursday. I have him Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday." (It went without saying that on Sundays we didn't ride.) "He's a very *strong* pony," I added encouragingly. "I'm sure he's up to your weight."

Politely, but still looking startled, Mr. Rickaby thanked me and said no. He said he feared the unusual exercise might prove too much for his old bones. But he had obviously taken the offer in the right spirit; we stood contemplating one another with mutual good will. I felt I simply mustn't let him get away.

"Perhaps," I suggested, "you'd like to come for a walk instead? I know some very good blackberry places."

"My dear child," said Mr. Rickaby, "this is most kind of you." (He said it as if he meant it.) "Unfortunately, I am even now expected at home. Had I a quarter of an hour to spare——"

It was then I took the plunge, told a falsehood and thrust his stolen fifteen minutes back into his hands.

"If you're going by the church clock," I said, "it's a quarter of an hour fast." And I added, really rather brilliantly: "There's a man coming tomorrow to climb into the steeple and put it right."

Without the slightest hesitation, Mr. Rickaby believed me. Perhaps he wanted to. With middle age, I have myself learnt how flattering it is to have my company sought by the young. When I seized Mr. Rickaby's hand, he made no demur: in two shakes I had him through our gap, across the Manor turf and into the woods.

I did my very best for him. I crammed into that fifteen minutes the blackberry place, the mushroom place, the hollow tree and the Tinkers' Dingle. I let him find—myself acting pointer—the largest berries, the single mushroom.

During a brief game of hide-and-seek, I slid behind a tree, and peeped round to make it easy for him. I saw him blink around short-sightedly. Surely he could not miss me, here, so close? I tried to make him see me; oh, how I tried! And when he did, there was no mistaking the enjoyment on his face. When it was his turn to hide, I never found him at all.

When we emerged fifteen minutes later—for I kept an ear cocked all the time for the church clock striking the quarter, and added the last five by guess—he told me he hadn't enjoyed himself so much since he was a boy.

I hadn't either. The last three weeks had aged me; I hadn't felt properly boy-like — tomboy-like, ploughboy-like — since the fatal day I took his pebble. As we parted again on the green—his book and loaf were still there—youth surged back into my legs and I leapfrogged our mounting-block from sheer exuberance. My conscience was at last clear, my appetite returned. I raced into the house and ate three buns before dinner.

But what had been happening, during that same quarter of an hour, at Mr. Rickaby's cottage? It is almost too dreadful to relate.

Miss Marlowe and Mr. Demetrios both arrived a few minutes early, thus missing the spectacle of Mr. Rickaby and myself in converse. The cottage door being as usual unlocked, both went in. Both, equally surprised by the absence of Mr. Rickaby, sat down to wait. For fifteen—nay, twenty—minutes they were alone together.

Today, it is difficult to appreciate the rarity of such a situation. Miss Marlowe was a young woman earning, more or less, her own living. It was accepted that she might spend a couple of hours a day alone with Mr. Rickaby. But then everyone knew who Mr. Rickaby was, and it was one facet of the Marlowes' confidence in him that they knew, without asking, that he would never place his secretary in any unladylike situation. Certainly he wouldn't leave her *tête-à-tête* with a person like Mr. Demetrios. If she took notes in the presence of both men at once, the impersonality of the proceeding acted as a social disinfectant. But now Miss Marlowe and Mr. Demetrios were together alone, and for twenty minutes; and how did Mr. Demetrios employ them? By underlining every danger to which Miss Marlowe might be, but had hitherto never been, exposed.

He made her, in short, a declaration.

With incredible obtuseness and audacity, Mr. Demetrios, who had nothing in the world but several millions, invited Cecilia Marlowe to become his wife.

That was shocking enough. What was more shocking still—Cecilia Marlowe accepted him.

I still thank heaven that in all the ensuing riot no one blamed *me*.

FOR there was a riot, so far as the Marlowes could raise one. Before the prospect of so appalling a mésalliance they and their connections roused themselves like a swarm of sleepy bees. Cecilia was reasoned with, browbeaten, sent away, brought back, set upon by titled aunts. Mr. Marlowe called on Mr. Demetrios at the Crown and ordered him to quit our village. Mr. Demetrios—pathetically prepared with a full statement of his financial situation—emerged from the interview to book his rooms for another month. For the first time within memory, a landlord of the Crown stood pat to a Marlowe of Old Mill—we all felt the social system crack—and Mr. Demetrios's booking was accepted.

Mr. Demetrios then went up to London and returned with an enormous diamond engagement ring, which Cecilia, receiving it by a suborned baker's boy, defiantly wore for two whole days. Mr. Marlowe—so village gossip ran—actually wrenched it from her finger and returned it to Mr. Demetrios in a matchbox. My mother said Mr. Marlowe had merely used rational arguments. In any case, Mr. Demetrios got it back to Cecilia a day later, by suborning the postman, and she wore it again until Mrs. Marlowe had a heart attack. Then Cecilia put it back in its case; but she still did not return it to Mr. Demetrios.

At least it must be acknowledged that the Marlowes weren't mercenary: Mr. Demetrios's money meant nothing to them. But then neither did Cecilia's happiness. One must remember the date—forty years ago; I remember myself the horror of my own parents. Even my mother, for years lamenting Cecilia's lack of suitors, could see no happy issue. "If only he'd been a gentleman!" wailed my mother; but that, of course, was the one thing Mr. Demetrios was not. . . .

It made no difference to Cecilia. She had glimpsed a wider horizon. With incredible, with unsuspected, tenacity she stuck to her guns. She was, I know now, twenty-seven years old; and if she couldn't marry Mr. Demetrios with her parents' consent, she announced, she would marry him without. Even in 1911 one couldn't actually lock a daughter up.

With as bad a grace as possible, the Marlowes gave way. Mr. Demetrios bought a special licence, and one morning, very quietly, in the village church—no choir, no organ, no bridesmaids—Cecilia became Mrs. Aristide Demetrios.

Immediately after the ceremony, the happy pair left for London, where they stayed at the Ritz, *en route* for Paris, where they stayed at the Crillon. Cecilia's horizon was widening with all possible speed.

No one, as I say, blamed me. Mr. Rickaby was blamed right and left; it was he who had brought Mr. Demetrios to our village in the first place; it was he who by his incredible carelessness had given Mr. Demetrios his opportunity. The Marlowes turned half their anger on him—but he never gave me away. We had it out together in private, one morning on the green.

"The church clock," said Mr. Rickaby, "on the morning of the recent . . . ah . . . sensation. I don't think it could have been fast after all."

I had had enough of crime. I decided to tell the truth.

"No, Mr. Rickaby," I said, "it wasn't. I just told you it was because I owed you a quarter of an hour."

Nearly everything I said to Mr. Rickaby seemed to astonish him. Perhaps this time he had more excuse than usual.

As I plunged on, describing how I took his pebble in the first place, his bewilderment simply deepened.

"But what was your motive?" asked Mr. Rickaby.

I mumbled that I didn't know.

"Had the pebble perhaps some childish value for you?"

I shook my head. Mr. Rickaby looked at me uneasily.

"But you must have had *some* object?" he urged.

I said I hadn't. It struck me that if we went on like this I should soon have wasted another fifteen minutes of Mr. Rickaby's valuable time.

I said flatly: "I'm a very *bad* child, so I expect it was just that. But I was sorry afterwards, and I heard you tell my father you'd like to be a boy again, so I made the quarter of an hour the sort my brothers like. I did have a motive *then*."

"And a kind one," said Mr. Rickaby.

He smiled. With immense relief I saw that he wasn't—unlike the usual adult—going to keep on at me. No doubt a man of his intelligence realized that there were some things it was simply no use keeping on at, like recurring decimals. He said kindly:

"I enjoyed our excursion very much, my dear. Don't meddle with time again; it's a subject for experts. But in this instance, I believe, we may say that all has ended well."

I thought it wonderful of Mr. Rickaby to take so broadminded and sensible a view.

I IMAGINE, today, that during the course of our conversation he had simply forgotten Cecilia Marlowe altogether. The notion of a child's playing about with time—manipulating it, so to speak—must have been at once interesting and surprising to him. He never offered to teach me higher mathematics, but we were always, after that interview, very good friends.

Our village never heard much more of Cecilia Demetrios. Rather staggering presents used to arrive each Christmas at Old Mill; but neither Mrs. Marlowe (in sable cape), nor Mr. Marlowe (offering his friends superb brandy), spoke freely of their daughter. My own opinion of how the marriage turned out is derived from Mr. Demetrios's autobiography, published in 1930.

It is a dry piece of writing, nothing but a bald compilation of facts set down in peculiarly stiff-jointed prose. Only once, at the end of the chapter headed "England;" does emotion show through.

"*It was during this visit,*" wrote Mr. Demetrios, "*that I met with the lady whose beauties of person and character, and whose quick intellectual sympathies, have ever since adorned my life. On the morning of October the fifth, 1911, seizing a long-sought opportunity, I successfully requested Miss Cecilia Marlowe to become my wife. It is a date that should rightly be printed here in letters of gold. . . .*"

I still have Old Ellen's text. The words there *are* printed in gold, except for "sixty diamond minutes" in frosted silver, now a little bald. It makes an excellent bookmark, and I keep it in Mr. Demetrios's book. THE END

TAKE MY TIP

KITCHEN sinks are expensive nowadays, and when I found water leaking through a tiny crack in the porcelain, I looked round for a way of repairing it myself. A nasty mess and extra expense were both averted simply by painting over the crack with clear nail varnish. It has now stood the test of a month's hard use.—P. Crombie, London, W.11.

JOHN BULL pays three guineas, on publication, for simple, original tips that show other readers how to carry out useful jobs in better ways. Address contributions to TAKE MY TIP, JOHN BULL, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, including (if they help) diagrams or photographs with the text. It is regretted that contributions cannot be returned unless they are accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

TV's STAR FIXER

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Written by Wilfred Greatorex, a fascinating article on the man who has been called the "brightest star of TV" will appear . . .

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

ENCOUNTER IN THE DARK

Continued from page 13

behaved in a cowardly, stupid and thoughtless manner. You brought shame upon your mother; you inconvenienced the police and the owner of the car; only by chance did you not involve yourself in a more serious offence—for you could easily have killed or maimed some bystander in your reckless attempt to escape pursuit. . . ."

After the magistrate there was the probation officer: hearty, schoolmasterly, confident. Full of suggestions that he should join the Cadets—or a football club. And his mother! Agreeing, agreeing! Never defending his courage, only whimpering shamelessly. "He's a good boy, sir. He is, really! Just a bit wild, p'raps, but not meaning any harm."

Walking delicately on the balls of his feet and using his torch only occasionally, the boy explored the ground floor of the house. He found silver in the drawers of the sideboard in the dining-room and a fur coat hung carelessly on a peg in the downstairs cloakroom, but he touched neither. He had no idea of how to get rid of stolen property. In the kitchen he found house-keeping money in a tea-caddy on the chimney piece. Forty-eight shillings. He slipped the money into his pocket. Expenses. Pay for the torch and the glass-cutter. Anyway, it was necessary to steal something to consummate his act of burglary.

He was still elated as he left the kitchen and went back through the green baize door leading to the hall. He took the pistol from his belt and made a silent game of pretending that he had been caught and was fighting his way out of a trap. At the foot of the stairs, he paused.

A strong impulse came to him to explore the house no farther. He ignored it and, bolstering up his courage with the gun in his hand, stealthily climbed the stairs, keeping close to the wall where the treads were firmly anchored. At the top there was a corridor.

By the light of his torch, he counted five doors leading off before walking to the far end of the corridor, where an uncurtained window admitted a pale glow of cloud-filtered moonlight. He stopped by the window, staring down at the smug suburban street upon which the house was fronted. As he watched, a policeman walked slowly past on the far side of the street. Stupid flatfoot! A joyous feeling of power brought a smile to the boy's lips. Hadn't he defied the police, the magistrate, the probation officer, his mother—all of them? Didn't his very presence in the house mean that he was too clever for them—and too courageous? He chuckled—quite loudly—in the darkness, feeling such confidence in himself that it was an irresistible thing to do.

Then a voice behind him said: "Who's there?"

The boy swallowed a cry, gulping it back as if it were bile in his throat. He turned—slowly—raising his arm in front of his face as if to ward off a blow.

The man who had spoken stood at the far end of the corridor by the head of the staircase. He was tall and bulky, but his face was a mere glimmer in the darkness. The boy slowly released his breath.

"Who's there?" the man said again. "Is that you, Mary?"

The boy wiped icy perspiration from his forehead with the back of his hand.

"You're a thief! Answer me! You're a burglar, aren't you?"

At last the boy replied, his courage returning, bolstered by the knowledge that his opponent, too, was frightened. "You bet I'm a burglar! I've got a gun! You're covered. If you don't let me go, I'll shoot!"

The man seemed to relax. "A very young burglar by your voice. A fool as well as a criminal."

"I tell you I'll shoot if you don't let me go! Put your hands up and get away from the stairs!"

The man did not move. As he stood

"Did you say 'Let me out of here'?"

he blocked the way to freedom. The boy swore in the darkness, hating the man, whipping himself into a frenzy of hatred that would support his courage.

"I tell you I'll shoot! Don't kid yourself I won't. Put your hands up!"

Now the man's voice was contemptuous. "*If* you have a gun, you're too terrified to use it."

Fury shook the boy. His hand trembled uncontrollably. Suddenly he squeezed the trigger of his pistol again and again.

The man had acute hearing. He caught the tiny sound of the firing pin snapping forward into the empty chamber of the Walther, and chuckled in the darkness. "There now," he said. "You've pretended to kill me. Hadn't you better give up and face the fact that you're trapped?"

The boy shuddered. Two thirds of the anger in him was directed at himself. He flung his useless pistol to the floor so viciously that it carved a groove in the surface of the polished floorboards. Then he walked towards his enemy, stiff-legged. "If you don't get out of my way, you'll get hurt. I'm warning you!"

The man heard the shaking, desperate snarl and stepped quickly forward. He took the boy's first blow upon the face but smothered the rest with his big arms. The boy found himself held in a hug which made nothing of his young strength. He was turned, lifted, and thrown bodily back down the corridor. He landed across the edge of a chair set beside the wall and a breath-taking pain shot through his right knee.

The man stayed where he was, waiting for the next attack. It did not come. The boy was defeated. He lay on the floor, his knee clutched between his hands, impotent with pain. Presently he whimpered: "Please put on the light. I think I've broken my leg."

This time the man's answering voice was very grim. "Why should I put on the light and give *you* an advantage?"

Pain dominated the boy, and it took a moment for him to see what the man meant. Then he understood. "You're blind. Blind!"

"Of course. Why else d'you think I walk about in a darkened house?"

The little moans of pain that came from the boy told the blind man that there was no need to fear another attack. His hand went out, fumbled for a second, then found the light switch at the head of the stairs. The light clicked on, making the boy blink with its unshielded brilliance.

"Well?" There was a contemptuous kindliness in the voice. "Have you broken your leg?" His hands felt for the limb and briefly felt it. "Bruised, I expect," he said. He was staring with the strange intensity of the sightless towards the boy. "I'm not sure you don't deserve a broken leg, you ridiculous little idiot! How did you get in?"

"Through a window downstairs."

"What have you stolen?"

"Nothing. I . . . I took some money from a tin in the kitchen. That's all. I swear that's all!"

"Did you think the house was deserted?"

"Yes."

The man smiled grimly. "Pity you had to pick a house where a blind man lived, wasn't it?"

The boy flexed his knee. It was hurting less—receding in importance. "Yes," he answered. "What are you going to do? I'll give you back the money. Please let me go."

The man was silent for a moment. "You're not a burglar," he said. "You're not anything, you young hooligan. But if I don't turn you over to the police you might easily turn into a burglar. You're stupid enough—and cowardly enough."

"I'm *not* cowardly!"

The blind man smiled. "So that's it. You committed burglary to prove that you were brave! How do you feel now? Brave?"

The boy snarled. "I'm not afraid! Go on—call the police. I don't care!"

The answer was ironical. "I'm glad to hear it, because that is just what I intend to do."

The boy stared dully at his tormentor. Blind! It should be easy to creep past the man and make a dash for it. Yet he knew that he would not try. He dared not.

"Stay where you are," the blind man said coldly. "I'm going to the telephone at the foot of the stairs. If you try to make a run for it I shall hear you coming. I'm much too strong for you, so you'd better not try. Understand?"

"Yes."

The man turned, moving with all the confidence that sightless people show in surroundings familiar to them.

He was over-confident. Either the struggle with the boy had dis-orientated him, or he was forgetful. His foot missed the topmost step of the staircase and he fell.

After the terrible sudden impact of the body at the foot of the stairs there was silence—and no movement.

The boy stared fixedly at the crumpled heap lying below him. One leg was doubled under the body in a monstrous, unnatural position. There was a great abrasion on the side of the man's face and head. A thin trickle of blood ebbed from the side of the slackly open mouth. He turned about and buried his face in his hands.

Now he'd be accused of murder! He'd been alone in the house with a blind man. He'd broken in—the forced window was damning, unalterable evidence of that. They'd say there had been a struggle—as there had. They'd find his bruised knee and accuse him of having pushed the blind man down the stairs. They'd never, never believe it had been an accident!

Panic gripped him. He stared down at his dirty, trembling hands. No gloves! He had taken them off when he finished his investigation of the ground floor. That meant there would be fingerprints everywhere. On the banisters, on the pistol, on everything! Even on the table he was leaning against. So—if he ran for it—he would be followed. He'd be hounded wherever he went. And he hadn't enough money. How could he escape anywhere, without money?

He felt so weak that he sat down on the stairs. He had imagined himself in situations like this an infinity of times. He had handled them calmly, callously, easily. He had trained himself to think as he imagined a gangster would think, or a private detective. Now he tried to think like that again. He succeeded in a way. Calmness, desperately achieved, brought a sure knowledge. He had to surrender. He had to pick up the telephone and call the police. That, and only that, was what he had to do.

Minutes later, he managed to summon the courage to act upon his knowledge. His hand edged towards the telephone, moving so slowly that it might have been forcing its way through a barrier of cotton wool. A calm, official voice answered the call. The boy took a deep breath, passing a bone-dry tongue over his lips.

"Hallo. . . . There's—there's been an accident. Blind man's fallen downstairs an' killed himself." He couldn't tell the whole story—not over the telephone—not to a policeman!

The official voice was asking him where. He swallowed, hurting himself because his throat was so dry, and gave the information. Presently he was asked his own name. His voice was a croak as he answered. "My name's Baxter. . . Bobby Baxter. Yes, that's right. All right, I'll wait."

He put down the receiver. It was over. He'd done it. Given them his name. Now they had him. Now there was no turning back. He'd done it—done it properly. He knuckled his eyes, trying to restrain tears of self-pity. He was going to be hanged. He was innocent, but he was going to be hanged all the same. It wasn't fair! Specially not when he'd rung up and reported it! Maybe they'd send him to prison, instead. They'd send him to prison for years—until he was an old man . . . until he was dead. . . .

He turned to look down at the body of the blind man. Dead. Like that. God! What *had* he done?

Presently, the distant noise of an ambulance bell reached his ears. They were coming. Didn't lose any time! Aloud, he cursed the police: cursed them for being sure, and calm and efficient. In reality he was cursing himself for being unsure and frightened, and, worst of all, defeated.

When the front door bell rang, the boy crossed the hall on dragging feet to answer it. The ambulance men on the threshold took in the situation at a glance and pushed past him to go to the injured man at the foot of the stairs. Behind the ambulance men stood two policemen.

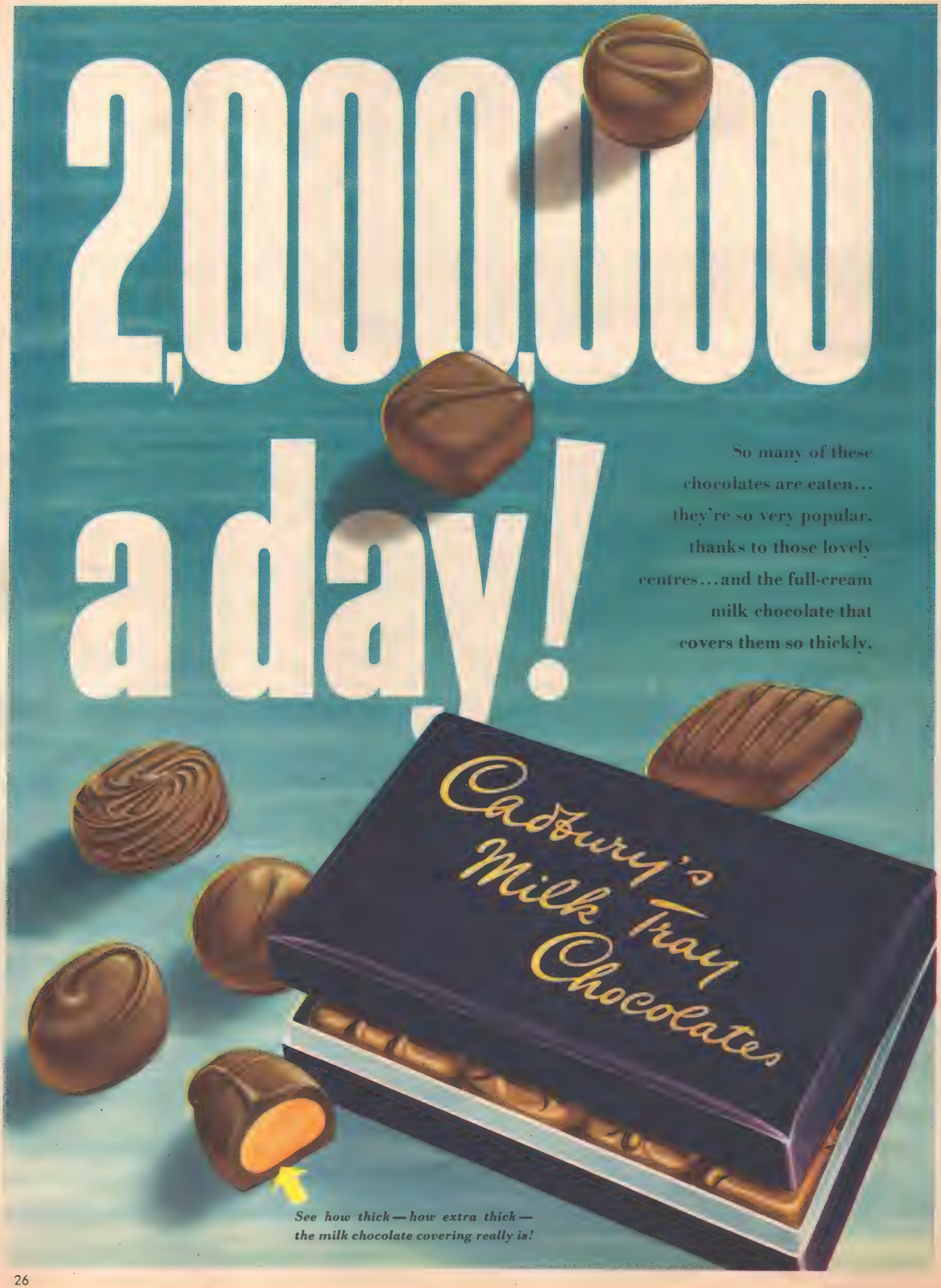
"What happened, son? How did he fall?"

The boy swallowed. "I . . . I dunno. He's blind. He tripped. . . Yes, that's what he did, he tripped. Honest he did!"

The elder of the two policemen took him gently by the arm. "Look here, Bobby—that's your name, isn't it? Now there's no need for you to be

2,000,000 a day!

So many of these chocolates are eaten... they're so very popular, thanks to those lovely centres...and the full-cream milk chocolate that covers them so thickly.



See how thick—how extra thick—the milk chocolate covering really is!

frightened, see, not of the police. We're here to help."

The boy was silent. The bulky, fatherly man in the blue uniform smiled at him. For an instant, a temptation swept over the boy. If only he could confide in this big man. If only he could tell him all about the car and the magistrate's court and his mother and everything; what a relief it would be! Then he remembered. Confide in a policeman! He was mad. This was an enemy.

He pulled his arm away from the big man's grasp and stared at the floor between his feet. Let 'em find out. Don't tell 'em anything. If they wanted to know things, let 'em find out.

One of the ambulance men looked up from his task. "He's alive."

The boy raised his head. Alive! That crumpled, twisted body alive! He couldn't believe his ears.

"Can he talk?" the elder policeman asked.

"Probably. . . in a minute or two. Coming round."

Both policemen moved across to the foot of the stairs to look down compassionately at the injured man. "Blind!" the younger one murmured. "Poor devil."

Hope was stirring in the boy's heart. He moved hesitantly to stand behind the policemen. The blind man's lips moved.

"Take it easy, chum. You're all right." This was one of the ambulance men.

"The boy," the blind man murmured. "There was a boy. . . ."

One of the policemen cut in. "He's still here, sir. He's the one that rang up and got us. Do you want to talk to him?"

The blind man frowned. "Still here! Is he, now? . . . Who are you. . . . Are you the police?"

"That's right, sir."

The boy shut his eyes. Here it came. Now for it. Not murder, though. Burglary. If the man would only get it over! He might die. Why couldn't he get on with it? If he died, it could still be murder. Please, please, mister, say something!

The blind man coughed. Blood appeared at the corner of his mouth. The ambulance men looked at one another dubiously, stopping the boy's heart with their foreboding. A terrible nausea swept over him and he turned away to conceal his weakness.

THE blind man licked his lips. "Hurts a bit to talk," he said. "Listen . . . listen carefully, will you?"

The elder policeman leaned forward, notebook in hand. "I'm listening, sir. Carry on."

"It was an accident. . . . Lost my footing at the top of the stairs. Silly. . . . Got. . . . Got too confident. Is the boy still here?"

The policeman beckoned. The boy approached, knelt, put his dirty hand on the blind man's arm. "I'm here, mister."

The blind man smiled. "Thank you for calling the police, my friend. I shan't forget it." He paused: then said calmly, "If you hadn't come to the door to tell me about the window, I still might have fallen. Might have been lying here until my sister came home. That wouldn't have been so good, would it?"

The ambulance man reached forward to take the blind man's hand. "Shouldn't talk any more, chum. Don't waste your strength. We'll have you all comfy in a hospital bed in no time, don't you worry." He glanced up at the elder policeman, who nodded. The two policemen stood back to permit the ambulance men to manipulate a splint. It was soon over. Then the blanket-wrapped figure was carried out through the front door and into the waiting vehicle. The engine started. The ambulance, white-painted, softly sprung and silent, rolled down the short drive and out into the street.

After he had locked the front door of the house behind him, the elder policeman glanced at the boy. "Don't worry, lad. He'll be all right. Being blind don't make much difference to a big, strong feller like that."

The boy looked at the policeman and nodded. "I know," he said. "It's . . . It's just that he was nice to me, that's all."

The policeman smiled. "He'll be all right, I dare say. Where d'you live, Bobby? Give you a lift?"

The boy glanced at the police car waiting in the drive. Give you a lift! Last time he'd seen a police car it had been drawn across the road in front of the big Ford he'd pinched. They hadn't been so perishin' polite that time! The strangeness of the situation struck him. He grinned suddenly.

"No, thanks," he said. "I'll be all right. I'd sooner walk home, if you don't mind."

"Up to you, mate," the younger one said cheerfully, climbing into the driver's seat of the car. The engine roared into life. Pausing with his hand on a doorhandle, the older policeman looked back at the boy. "Good night, Bobby. You done well. Wish all kids your age could keep their heads like you do."

The boy answered: "Thanks. Good night." Then he thought: Kids! Wouldn't they ever learn?

After the car had gone, he walked slowly down the drive. It was nice to be alone. Kid or no kid, he needed to be alone in order to think. At the bottom of the drive, he chose a good round pebble and kicked it out on to the pavement. Then he went slowly home with his hands in his pockets and his head bent, kicking the pebble as he walked. The blind man would have been pleased at his thoughts. THE END

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*

THE FAR COUNTRY

Continued from page 16

lumberman," Jack Dorman explained. "He's an educated man."

There was a little silence. "I don't suppose he thinks much of Australia and Australians," Jane said.

"He thinks it's a lovely country," Jennifer told her. "He doesn't want to live anywhere else. Only, he'd like to know some people. That's why he's so keen to find out something about Charlie Zlinter and his dog. He wants to take me over to the Howqua some time, to see his tombstone. I'd like to see it, and I'd like to see the Howqua, but I'm not going to walk ten miles there and ten miles back in this hot weather."

Jack Dorman said: "You could take the utility. Zlinter can drive, I suppose?"

"I really don't know," Jennifer said. "I should think he could. We'll ask if he turns up again. I'd be afraid he might smash the Chev up."

"It's worn out, anyway. I've been thinking we should get a Land Rover to replace it."

"That's enough of that," said Jane. "We've got too many cars already. I'm going to have my painting before we get another car."

"I thought you'd forgotten about that," he said.

"Indeed, I haven't. It's just that I don't know how to get the sort of painting that I want. I'm not going to have one of those modern things we saw in Melbourne."

JENNIFER went to bed that night unreasonably happy. She was still happy next morning till the postman came by just before dinner, and Mario went down to pick up the mail from their box on the main road. There was a letter from her father, air-mailed from England; the happiness went from her face, and was succeeded by a troubled frown. Jane saw it, and said casually: "Everything all right at home?"

"Not absolutely," the girl said quietly. "Mummy's been in bed with bronchitis. They seem to have had terrible weather in England. Of course, it's January."

"Not serious, is it?"

"Oh, no. The thing is that when mummy's ill it makes things hard for daddy. They've only got a woman who comes in in the mornings." She paused. "It happened last winter, and I took ten days of my holiday and went up there and ran the house. I didn't bargain on it happening again this winter."

She said no more, but she was troubled at the thought of difficulties in the snow and rain of the Midlands, so far away.

At dinner Jack Dorman said: "I'm going in this afternoon to meet Jim Forrest, the lumber camp manager, at the hospital. Anyone got anything for the post?"

"I shall have," Jennifer said. "I want to write an air-mail to my mother. I'll let you have it after dinner."

Jack Dorman drove into Banbury in the new utility, posted Jennifer's letter before he forgot it, and drove round to the hospital. Jim Forrest's car was parked in the street; he parked behind it and went in. A New Australian wardmaid told him that Mr. Forrest was with Dr. Jennings in the office; he put his head in at the door.

"Come in, Mr. Dorman," said the doctor. "I was just telling Jim here about these men."

He was a small, brown-haired man with a sandy little moustache and blue eyes; he had been an officer in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps in the war, and he still had the appearance of an officer in civvies.

Jack Dorman went in and sat down.

"What's the news, Doctor?"

"I was telling Jim," the doctor repeated. "I've just finished the post-mortem. The man was an alcoholic all right. You never saw such a liver. I'm preserving part of it in spirit until after the inquest, just in case anybody wants to see it. He was full of whisky, too."

Jim Forrest said with feeling: "He must have been."

"He certainly was. Matter of fact, I should have thought there was more than a bottle in him, but I suppose I'm wrong. There was certainly a lot." He paused. "I had a look at the amputation, while I was at it. It was carefully done. One of the ligatures was damaged a little, probably while he was struggling. But the job was done all right."

Jim Forrest said: "He'd have been right, but for the whisky?"

"I wouldn't say that. Sepsis might easily have set in. As I understand it, the amputation was done out in the open, to free him from the bulldozer. All I can say is that the job was well done from the surgical point of view."

There was a pause. "As regards the other one," the doctor said, "the fractured skull, it's much the same story. I took an X-ray this morning. If I had been doing the job here I'd have taken an X-ray before operating, of course. If I had done so, I should probably have removed one more small piece of bone that Zlinter has left in. Working without the X-ray, as he did, I should very likely have left it, as he did. Considering the X-ray this morning, I decided to leave well alone." He paused. "I don't think anybody could have done much more. But there's no denying that the conditions were bad for any cranial surgery."

Jack Dorman said: "Taking it by and large, though, he didn't do a bad job?"

"I think that's a fair statement."

"You tell them that at the inquest, Doctor, will you?" asked Jim Forrest.

"That's right. That's what I shall say at the inquest."

Jack Dorman said: "If he can do a job like that, why can't he be a doctor properly? Get a licence, or whatever you call it?"

"There's a ruling about these immigrant doctors. In this state they've got to do the last three years of their training over again. It varies according to the state, I think. I know it's easier in West Australia."

"Pack of bloody nonsense," said the grazier. "We could do with another doctor here, and now we've got one and we're not allowed to use him."

"You've got to have a rule," Jennings said. "Most of these D.P. doctors are crook doctors, oh my word. You'd be the first to raise a scream if some of them got loose upon your family."

He paused. "I don't want you to think I'm against Zlinter," he said. "I think he's a good man. If he was qualified, I'd like to see him practise in this district and take some of the work off me. But not until he's been checked over at the hospital and been passed out as competent."

"And that takes three years?"

"I don't know if that would apply to Zlinter. I don't know if they make

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Good into evil

MOST things can be put to evil uses as readily as they can be used for good. An aeroplane can carry a surgeon to save life, or a bomb to destroy it.

Strong impulses can enable a man to do good. They can equally impel him to evil. It all depends, not on the strength of his desires, but on the power of his conscience.

The raw material of human nature is only dangerous when it is unbalanced by lack of a strong will.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

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Ever read a foot?

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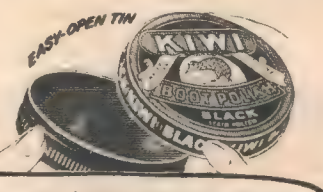
KIWI



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Grown-ups' indigestion . . . teen-age acidity . . . the youngster's tummy upsets—'Milk of Magnesia' dispels them all. Baby's 'windigestion' too, is soon put right.

But 'Milk of Magnesia' is more than a pleasant and effective antacid—it acts gently but surely as a laxative as well. A bottle kept handy in the Medicine Cabinet ensures ready relief whenever the need arises.

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* REGD. TRADE MARK

Your Friend for Life

any exceptions. Probably not. I think he probably *would* have to do three years again."

"It seems the hell of a long time," the grazier said.

The doctor got up from the desk; he had still a lot of work ahead of him. "It's better to be safe than sorry."

The grazier went out into the street with the timber manager. "What about a beer?" They got into their cars and drove down to the main street, and parked under the shade of the trees in front of the Queen's Head Hotel.

It had been market day in Banbury, but the market was over before dinner, and now in the late afternoon only the dregs of the crowd remained in town. The bars, which had been hot and crowded most of the day, were thinning out; the tired barmen were relaxing, watching the clock for closing time at six. Jack Dorman and Jim Forrest went into the saloon bar and ordered beers, and stood discussing what they had learned from the doctor about Zlinter.

It was still warm and the beer was very cold; they had a glass of beer, and then another, and another in the space of twenty minutes.

A YARD away was an old man hunched on a stool, a red-haired old man, now turning grey but still fiery on top; a broad-shouldered old man who must have been a very strong man in his time. He had a comical twist to his mouth and a general appearance of good humour, and he was drinking whisky, evidently determined to sit it out until the bar closed. From his appearance he had been there all the afternoon.

Presently the barman said, "Last drinks," and the clock stood at two minutes to six. Jim Forrest hurriedly ordered four more beers and the barman pushed the dripping glasses across the counter; the old man by their side sat sunk in reflection or in slumber, a half-glass of whisky before him. They drank two beers apiece, and then, at ten past six, the barman said: "We're closing now," and it was time to go. He said to the old man: "Come on, Pop. Closing now."

The old man did not stir, but mumbled something incoherent.

Jack Dorman smiled, and put his hand on the old man's shoulder. "Come on, Pat," he said. "Time to go home now. Finish up your drink. Got your jinker here?"

The old man raised his head, and very slowly lifted his glass and drank it off, with the utmost deliberation. Jim Forrest smiled. "Who is he?"

"Pat Halloran. He's got a place five miles out on the Benalla Road." Jack knew the old man fairly well. He had come out from Southern Ireland as a stable boy at the end of the last century, and he had been about the district ever since but for one trip home to Limerick between the wars. He was a widower and his two sons ran the property and did most of the work; he enjoyed coming into market and meeting his cronies and getting drunk, a simple pleasure that he could afford on his five-figure income. His sons drove large and powerful utilities rather too fast, but the old man had never learned to drive a car and came to town each market day in a jinker, a two-wheeled trap drawn by an old horse.

Jack Dorman smiled again, waited till the old man had drained his glass, and said: "Come on, Pat. It's closing time; we're getting thrown out of here. Where did you leave your jinker?".

"It's in the yard out at the back," the barman said. "Take him out through this way, if you like."

"Take the other arm, Jim," said Jack Dorman. "We'll put him in the jinker, and he'll be right."

The old man got down from the stool, and they steadied him, one on each side. "I'm right," the old man said. "Only I'm drunk. I know you. You're Jack Dorman, up to Leonora." He swayed wildly, and they steered him into the passage, the barman holding the door open for them. "It's a shameful thing I'm telling you," he said seriously, "but I'm drunk, drunk as Charlie Zlinter."

The grazier started. "What's that, Pat? Who are you as drunk as?"

"Drunk as Charlie Zlinter," the old man repeated. "I know you. You're Jack Dorman, up to Leonora. You know me, Pat Halloran, from Limerick. You know me, I know you, and you know Charlie Zlinter. Good old Charlie!"

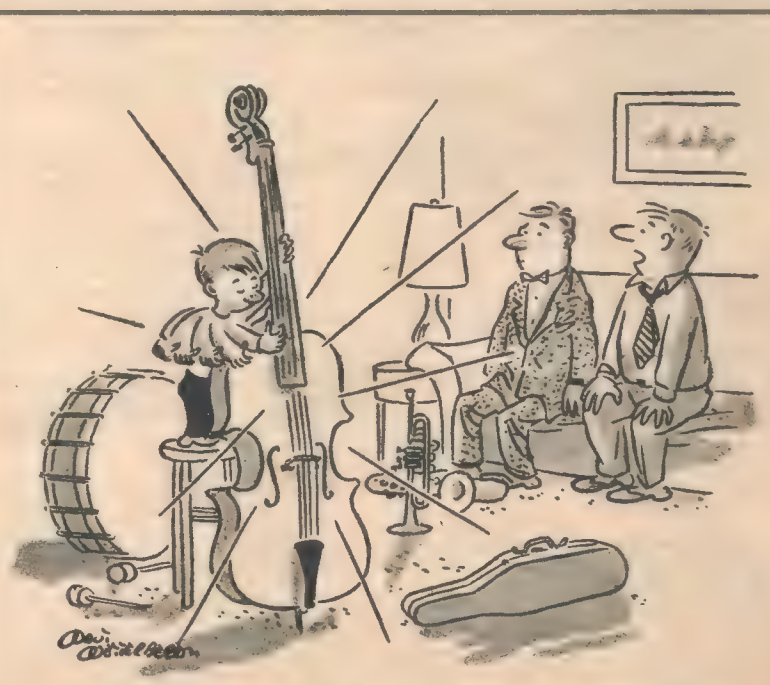
"I don't know Charlie Zlinter, Pat," the other said. "Who was Charlie Zlinter?" It was quite possible that this old man could have been in the district when Howqua was a thriving township.

Pat Halloran turned bellicose. He checked in the passage; he was still a powerful man, and brought them to a standstill. "What was that you would be saying? Who was Charlie Zlinter? Haven't I heard with my own ears you two talking all the while of Charlie Zlinter? Is it a fool that ye'd be making of me, just because I'm having drink taken? Will ye fight me, now?"

"Nobody's making a fool of you, Pat, and I won't fight you," said the grazier. "Tell us about Charlie Zlinter when you knew him, and I'll tell you what I know about him, and there'll be a pair of us. What did Charlie Zlinter do?"

"He got bloody drunk," the old man said.

They came into the stable yard and



"To make matters worse, he's versatile as well as talented"

there was the jinker, the horse patiently waiting to take his master home.

The grazier said: "The jinker's right, Pat. Can you get up in it?"

The old man grabbed the splash-board and the seat-rail, put one foot upon the step, and swung himself up into the seat, the habit of fifty years undefeated by alcohol. He took the reins, and lifted the whip from the socket. "I'll be right, boys," he said. "Sure, an' I'll be wishing you a very good evening." Now that he was in his vehicle he seemed to be at home, indeed, he looked almost sober.

The grazier stood for a moment at the wheel, looking up at the old man. "What else did Charlie Zlinter do, Pat, besides getting drunk?"

The old man stared down at him. "Charlie Zlinter. . . ." And then he stood up in the jinker and, with dramatic flourishes of the whip that made the grazier retreat hurriedly, recited:

"Charlie Zlinter and his heeler hound
Fell into the Howqua and got
bloody well drowned.
Be warned, fellow sinners, and
never forget
If he hadn't been drunk he'd
have been living yet."

He touched the horse skilfully with the whip and drove out of the yard. The grazier was left facing Jim Forrest, who was laughing. "What the hell was all that about, Jack?"

The grazier scratched his head. "Charlie Zlinter," he replied. "But I reckon it's a different Charlie Zlinter from the one we know."

CARL ZLINTER arrived in Banbury at about nine on Saturday morning, riding in the back of a utility that had picked him up on the road. He had not breakfasted, and he went and had it in a café, bacon and two eggs and coffee. They gave him a Melbourne paper two days old to read, and he sat smoking a cigarette after it, enjoying the leisure.

When he paid his bill, he said to the girl who had served him: "Do you know a family called Shulkin? They are New Australian. The man works on the railway."

She looked at him blankly; she came of a family of Australians that had been casual labourers for generation after generation, bad stock and mentally subnormal. She and her family were bitterly hostile to all immigrants, especially the European ones who worked too hard and were guilty of the social crime of saving money, thereby threatening the Australian Way of Life. "Never heard of them," she said scornfully.

He smiled at her as he paid his bill, and went out and walked down the long, wide, tree-lined main street towards the railway station. The stationmaster might know about Shulkin.

The stationmaster said: "Aw, look, Stan Shulkin, he's not working today. There's a green-painted shack, the third down this road, with an old railway coach they use for sleeping in alongside. You'll find Stan there, unless he's in the town."

He found the shack and railway coach, a poor sort of habitation. There was a man digging in the garden, a man of about forty-five or fifty, with black hair going bald on top. Behind the railway coach he saw a fresh-faced woman with a dumpy, peasant figure hanging out some washing, and there were a couple of children playing in the background. He opened the gate and went in, and spoke to the man. "Are you Stan Shulkin?"

The man straightened up and said: "I am Stanislaus Shulkin."

The Czech said in German: "My name is Carl Zlinter, and I work in the timber camp at Lamirra. Do you prefer to speak English?"

"Always," the man said. "Always I speak English. It is better for the children. The wife, she speaks it very bad. She does not try."

Carl Zlinter said: "You must excuse, but I have heard that you are an artist."

The man smiled shyly across his broad face. "I paint pictures only now one or two each year," he said. "There is not time, and people here do not want pictures. When I came first to this place three years ago, I said, 'Now I will paint pictures and we shall make much money.' But it did not happen in that way. Now I paint only a little."

"You work on the railway?"

"In the platelaying gang. It is very hard work, and not good for the hands, for painting. I do not think that I shall paint many more pictures."

"You are Estonian?"

"Lithuanian," the man said. "I am from Kaunas."

"I am from Pilsen," Zlinter said. "In my country I was a doctor, but now I am a labourer." The man nodded in comprehension. "I have friends who want a picture. They are not artistic, but they have much land and plenty of money. They are more educated than some, and they have bought all the motor cars that they can use, and now they want an oil-painting."

"So?" said the Lithuanian. "I would have thought it would have been a radio or a washing machine."

"They will have those also," said Zlinter, "but the woman wants an oil-painting. She has seen exhibitions of ugly pictures in Melbourne, and those she does not want. She is simple, and she wants a beautiful picture that will give pleasure to those who do not understand about pictures. There is a man called Spiegel in the camp who told me you can paint such pictures."

"I can paint such pictures," Shulkin said. "I can paint any sort of picture."

"May I see?"

SHULKIN led the way into the railway coach. It had been an open coach without compartments at one time; now it had been roughly converted into three rooms with matchboarding partitions. Much of the seating still remained unchanged, and each of the three rooms still had two doors upon each side. The end room that they went into was furnished with a bed, an easel, and a great litter of old canvases and frames stacked along one side. "I buy old canvases and frames at the sale," the artist said. "It is cheaper so."

He pulled out a canvas from the heap, a beautifully executed still life of two herrings on a plate, a loaf of bread, a pat of butter, and a glass of beer, laid out in strong light on a soiled table-cloth with a dark background. "This I did in the camp. I call it 'Lithuanian Fisherman's Breakfast.'"

He plucked another canvas from the heap and set it on the easel in place of the still life. It was a bright river scene with a fine blue sky and white clouds, and a riot of golden wattles on the bank, making a delicate harmony of colour. "So . . ." said Carl Zlinter. "This you should show her."

He stood back, and looked critically at the river scene. "You must have had a great deal of experience."

"I studied in Paris and in Rome," the platelayer replied. "I was Professor of Artistic Studies in the University of Kaunas."

There did not seem to be anything to say to that. Zlinter stayed a little while and had a cup of tea.

"I will tell Mrs. Dorman about you," he said. "I will tell her this evening."

He went off presently, and caught a bus out on the Benalla Road. Twenty minutes later he was walking up to the Halloran homestead. A small girl came to the kitchen door and he asked for Mr. Pat Halloran.

"He's in the wood shed," she said.

In the wood shed Zlinter found a red-haired old man splitting sawn logs with a sledge-hammer and wedges, doing the work with the skill of a lifetime rather than with any great muscular effort. "Please," he said. "May I speak to you? Mr. Jack Dorman, he said you were talking about Charlie Zlinter in the Queen's Head, on Thursday."

"Jack Dorman? I haven't set eyes on the man these last six months."

"Perhaps you do not remember," the Czech said diplomatically. "He helped you up into the jinker on Thursday."

"Would that be so! Well, Glory be to God, I didn't know a thing about it! Would you believe that, now?"

The Czech evaded the rhetorical question. "Jack Dorman said that you were speaking of this Charlie Zlinter. I have seen the grave."

"Ye have not. Charlie Zlinter was buried in the Howqua, and the fire went through. There's nothing left there now."

"The head-stones are left," the other said. "They are stone, and so they did not burn. The head-stones are there now, all of them, in the forest by the river, where there was the cemetery."

"Do ye tell me that!"

He had gained the old man's interest, and he held it while he explained the position to him. "This Charlie Zlinter, he was from Pilsen in Bohemia," he said at last. "That is on the stone. I am another Charlie Zlinter, also from Pilsen in Bohemia. I am trying to find out what I can about him."

The old man leaned on his sledge. "He was a bullocky," he said at last. "I wouldn't be able to say at this distance of time if he worked for himself or if he worked for Murphy. He drove a wagon with a team of bullocks, six bullocks or eight would it have been? Holy saints above, I'm losing all my memory."

"What was Charlie Zlinter like?"

"Ah, he was a fine, big fellow with dark curly hair, and he spoke English in the way you speak it. He was one for the booze, and he was one for the girls, holy saints above! He had a cabin in the town at Howqua, for he went there as a miner first of all, and then he had the wit to see he'd make more money with a wagon and a team. By the Mother of God, I'd think shame to repeat all that went on in that cabin. He was a big, lusty man, and drink and women were his downfall. That's the truth I'm telling you."

"What did he die of?"

"Drink and drowning," the old man said, "drink and drowning, and his dog with him, only the dog wasn't drunk, though it might have been at that, the company it kept. It was August, and the river was running full with the melting snows. There was a girl living in the Howqua by the name of Mary Nolan, oh, a wicked girl, I'd think shame to tell you all that that girl did, and she so soft and well spoken, and pretty, too."

HE shook his head, looking gravely at Carl. "She lodged on the other side of the river from the Buller Arms Hotel that Peter Slim kept, the father of the forest ranger in the Howqua now. And Charlie Zlinter, he stayed in the hotel till close on midnight, and then he made to go across the river to see this girl. Well, most parts of the year ye'd cross the Howqua and never wet your feet by stepping on the stones, but in August and September with the melting snows on the high mountains, it runs five or six feet deep.

"There was a cable bridge, a bridge of two wire ropes with planks across and another one to hold on to, and Charlie Zlinter, drunk the way he was, must go across this bridge to see this girl. And when he came up to the bridge the dog wouldn't go upon it, and so Charlie picked it up in his arms and started off across the bridge in the dark night, with the dog in his arms and the bridge swaying and going up and down with every step he took, and he as drunk as a lord. And that was the end of it."

"He fell off the bridge into the water?"

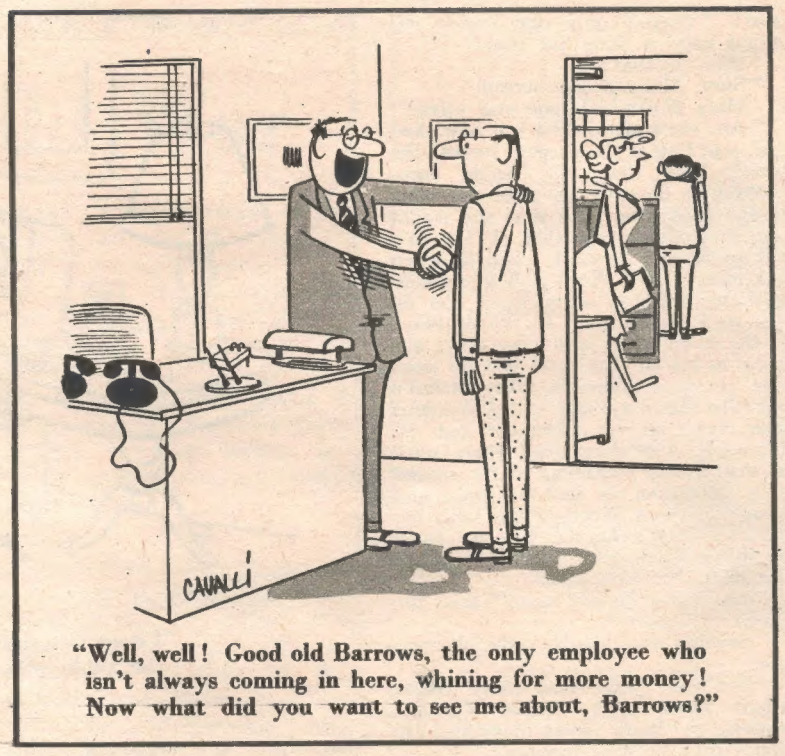
"He did that. They found him half a mile down stream come the morning, him and the dog together. There was never a priest there to say a mass for him, and they buried him and the dog in the one grave, which the priest would never have allowed."

"This Charlie Zlinter was almost certainly some relation of my own," said the Czech, "because he came from my own town. Did you ever hear anything about him—who his relations were, or who he wrote to?"

"Sure, an' I wouldn't know a thing like that at all," the old man said.

Carl Zlinter thought for a moment. He asked: "You do not know what happened to his papers?"

The old man shook his head and



"Well, well! Good old Barrows, the only employee who isn't always coming in here, whining for more money! Now what did you want to see me about, Barrows?"

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Watch out for further details next week

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John Bull 23/8/52

said: "There's only one person left might know a thing like that."

"Who is that?"

"Sure, Mary Nolan herself."

"Mary Nolan! Is she still alive?"

"Ah, she's alive. She was a wicked girl, and Father Geoghegan, he was the priest here then, he would have nothing to do with her until she came to the confession, and that she would not do, and Holy Mother of God, it's not to be wondered at. And so when the mine closed down and everybody left the Howqua what must she do but go for a barmaid at Woods Point in the hotel there, and very strict she came to be, so that there was no loose talk or dirty jokes in Mary Nolan's bar. She married a man called Williams who lived on an allotment out by Jamieson, and they lived there until he died at the beginning of the second war. And then she sold the place, and went to live at Woods Point with her brother-in-law's family; I'd say she'd be living there yet. I haven't heard she died."

"She must be old now," said the Czech.

"Seventy-five, maybe," the old man said.

"Do you think that Mary Nolan might have kept Charlie Zlinter's papers, or know what happened to them when he was drowned?"

"Ah, I wouldn't be saying that at all. She's the only person living in the district now that might know something, though it's a long while ago. I'll say this now, she knew Charlie Zlinter better than anyone else, and better than she had any right to as a single woman."

Carl Zlinter left him presently, and walked back into the town. He got a lift to Leonora and walked across the paddocks towards the homestead.

It was a brilliant afternoon. As he made his way through the paddock gates, the beauty of the place struck him afresh. He began to see it as it must appear to the English girl, to whom it was all so new. As he opened the last gate, he started with surprise and pleasure. Jennifer stood only a few feet away from him.

"Hallo, Carl. You're just in time for tea!"

For a moment he only looked at her, saying nothing, noticing how the Australian sun had already tinged her skin with brown. She wondered if he would ever overcome his shyness in her presence. But then he broke into a smile of frank admiration. "It is ver' kind of you to come to meet me. I have a small piece of news for you and Mr. Dorman, if you are not busy."

"I'm sure Jack will be glad to see you," Jennifer said.

At the homestead they made him welcome, and over tea he told them about his conversation with old Halloran.

"Mrs. Williams," Jane said thoughtfully. "Old Mrs. Joshua Williams, would that be? Used to live at Sharon, out past Jamieson?"

"I do not know," he said. "I did not hear the name of the station. Only that she married a man called Williams."

"I think that must be the one." She turned to Jack. "You remember old Mrs. Williams, the one who used to breed geese when we came here first."

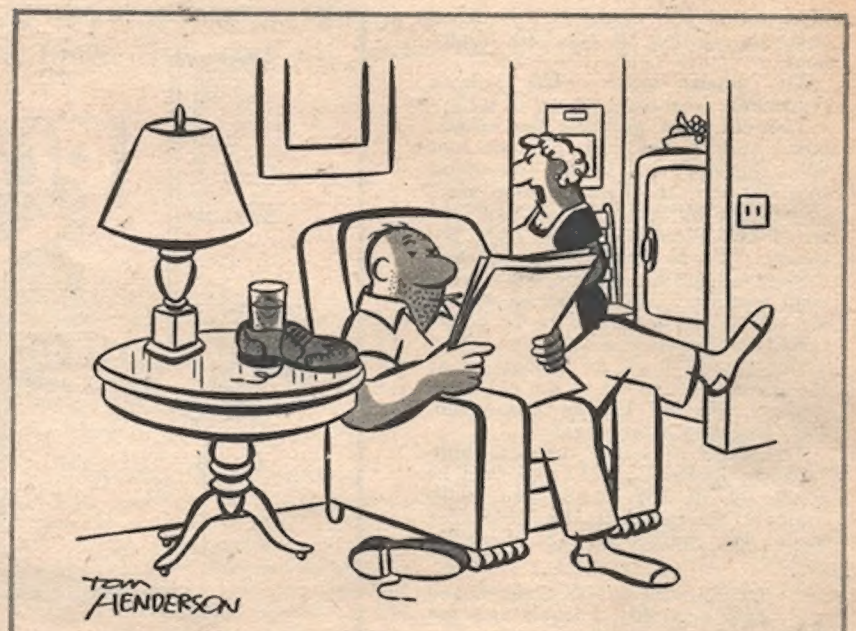
They finished tea and washed the dishes, and went out on the veranda and sat down. Jack Dorman gave his guest a cigarette. "Inquest's on Monday morning," he said. "You'll be there, I suppose?"

Carl Zlinter smiled, a little wryly. "I shall be going with Mr. Forrest," he said. "I think he will come back without me, because I shall be in prison."

"That's not going to happen. The doctor's on your side, and it's what he says that counts."

He shrugged his shoulders. "I would not care a great deal if I went to prison," he said, "so long as it should stop at that. But in my state, if I should do a crime in this two years, I think they can send me back to Germany, into a camp. That would be very bad."

Jennifer said: "They'd never do



"I hope you didn't put that wet glass on the table without something under it"

that, Carl. It's not going to be like that at all."

He shrugged his shoulders gloomily. "It could happen."

She laughed. "They'd have to send me, too, because I helped."

He turned to her. "Will you be at the inquest?"

"I'll be there. The police rang up this morning and said they wanted me."

"It would be different for you, if this went badly," he said. "The worst that they could do for you would be to send you back to England, and that is your home. This place is now home for me, and I want very much to stay here."

"Nothing like that's going to happen," Jack Dorman said shortly. "They've got more sense."

"I hope that is true. . . ."

It seemed to Jennifer that he was taking this very badly, but in his position that might be inevitable. She did not like to think of him brooding all the weekend over possible deportation back into the displaced persons' camps of Europe.

"You promised that you'd take me to see Charlie Zlinter's grave some time," she said. "I want to see the Howqua. What about taking me there tomorrow?"

He glanced at her, smiling; it seemed too good to be true. "I would like to take you there, ver' much," he said. "But I think it is too far for you to walk."

"Jack said he'd lend us the utility—the Chev. Could we go tomorrow, Jack?"

"Sure," he said. "Sunday's the best day to take the Chev."

He turned to Zlinter. "Say, can you drive?"

The Czech smiled. "I can drive. Before the war I had a little car, an Opel, in my own country, and in the war I drove many cars and trucks. I have not driven in Australia, and I have not got a licence."

"Ah, look—it don't matter about the licence, not up here. You can take the Chev tomorrow, if you want it," Jack said.

The dark man beamed: "It is very, very kind. I will be ver' careful of it, Mr. Dorman."

"You won't be able to be careful of it, not up on that Howqua track. But it'll take you there all right, up on to the top, that is, by Jock McDougall's paddock. I wouldn't take it down the other side, not down into the Howqua Valley—I was telling Jenny. But that cuts it down to a two-mile walk instead of ten."

Zlinter said again: "It is very, very kind. . . ."

Presently he said: "There is one other thing, Mrs. Dorman. This morning, I visited a New Australian who can paint pictures, a man called Stan Shulkin. Do you know about him?"

"I know about him," said her husband. "Chap who works on the railway."

"That is the man. Have you seen his pictures?"

Jack Dorman shook his head. "I remember someone saying in the pub one day there was a New Australian who can paint."

Carl Zlinter turned to Jane. "I think it might be interesting to you to go down to his small house and see what he can paint," he said. "I went there this morning. I think perhaps that he could make the sort of picture that you want."

She laid her sewing down. "I want a really good picture, Carl, done by a proper artist. I don't want anything done by an amateur."

"I do not know very much about pictures," he replied. "I saw some very fine oil-paintings this morning that this man had done."

She wrinkled her forehead. "Has he ever studied anywhere? I mean, it might be difficult if I went there and his pictures were too bad for what I want. You do see what I mean?"

"I understand," he said. "He has studied in Paris and in Rome; before the war he was Professor of Art Studies in the University of Kaunas. I think he is a very good artist."

"But what's he doing here?"

"He works as a labourer upon the railway."

She stared at him. "Is that the only thing that he can find to do?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I do not know. He came to Australia three years ago, as a displaced person, and he was sent for his two years to work upon the railway, here in Banbury. He has stayed here since, and what else can he do? Here he has a house and easy work and a quiet life after the camps in Germany. He has tried to sell paintings, but not many people buy an oil-painting in Banbury."

"Are his pictures pretty? Are the colours nice?"

"I saw a very beautiful picture of the Delatite River in the spring, all blue and golden, with the wattles. It looked like the river, and the colours were ver' beautiful."

"That sounds the sort of thing," she said. "I'd better go and see him." She laughed. "It would be funny if I found the sort of picture that I want in Banbury, after searching all over Melbourne for it."

Jennifer walked down the road with Carl Zlinter when he went away. Jane watched them disappear across the paddocks. "Are you going with them tomorrow?" she asked.

He grinned. "Give 'em a break."

"I don't know that it's a good thing," she said. "I don't know that her father and mother would be very pleased."

"They shouldn't have let her come twelve thousand miles away from

home by herself, then," he said. "Far as I remember, your father and mother weren't too pleased, either."

"I rather like him," she said, "once you get used to the foreign way."

"He's right," he said.

As they were walking across the paddocks, Jennifer was saying: "I don't think there's anything to be afraid of in this inquest, Carl. Honestly, I don't."

"I do not think there is a need to be afraid," he said, "but I shall be happy when it is over."

He looked around him. The moon was coming up and the bowl of the Delatite Valley was touched with a silvery light; it was very quiet.

"I should be very unhappy if it happened that I had to leave this country," he said.

"I think I should, too," said Jennifer. "I'm English, of course, but this is very lovely. In many ways it's like what England must have been a hundred years ago."

She told him about Leicester, her life in London, and her grandmother's dying wish that she should seek a happier life in Australia.

"She was right," he said. "It is a country that is prosperous and secure."

"It's a lovely country," the girl said. "Prosperous—yes, it's very prosperous. Secure—I suppose it is. Nobody seems to be afraid an atom bomb is going to land next door tomorrow, like we are in England."

"No," he said. "All that seems very far away from here."

He turned to her. "Here is a country where a man can live a sane and proper life, even if it is only one little log hut in the middle of the woods for a home. I love this country for those things, because here one can gather a few toys around oneself, a fishing rod or two, some books, a little hut, a place to call one's own—and all is safe. If then a war must come in Europe, it may be my duty to go to fight again upon the side that Australia will be on, and that I do not mind, because after the war is over, if I live, I can come back to my little place, here in Australia, my hut, my fishing rods, and my books, and all will be quite safe, and I can be at peace again."

CARL stopped suddenly, a little embarrassed. "I am so sorry. I have spoken too much."

"I'm glad you did," she said. "I wondered what made you so fond of this country. Now I think I understand a bit."

"I think it is how all we homeless people feel," he said. "People who have lost their own country want more than anything to find a place where they can build a new home round themselves without the fear that they will ever lose it again."

"What'll you do when your time at the camp is up?" she asked. "Where will you make your home?"

"I do not know that," he said. "I think that it will be not very far from here." They came to the road gate. "I have a strange idea in my head," he said, "but I will not tell you now."

"Oh, Carl! What is it?"

He laughed. "Perhaps I will tell you tomorrow. Are you sure that it will be all right if we go to the Howqua?"

"I'd love to, if you're free. I'm not doing anything."

"I will come here for you at about ten o'clock."

He made a stiff little bow. "Till then. Good night, Miss Jennifer."

"If we're going out tomorrow, Carl, cut out the Miss Jennifer. Everybody calls me Jenny here."

"All right. Good night, Jenny."

"Good night, Carl."

Her voice was calm, but she did not feel calm. She felt a little light-headed, a little nervous. She had never felt like this before in her life.

To be continued next week

FROM MY FAMILY ALBUM

The photograph on page 20 is of Maurice Chevalier as a child. The text is taken from Chevalier's autobiography, "The Man In The Straw Hat" (Odhams, 12s. 6d.).

FOR HIM, £500—FOR YOU, a four-figure FORTUNE?

EXPRESSING his thoughts on Britain's crisis, a young engineer, Mr. R. P. Taylor, 34 Beckenham Avenue, East Boldon, Co. Durham, recently produced his £500 *Bullet*: ON PAPER—BRITANNIA'S POOR—ON *Parchment?*

This week's result announces another "Bulleteer" who has just captured £500. And this week, too, there comes an opportunity for you to win for a few well-chosen words as much as both those winners together; use your coupon below to capture £1,000 cash!

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Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

- Reins Of Government
- The Atom
- Britons Are Optimists, So
- Fruits Of Toil
- Shock For Farouk
- To Make The Roads Safe
- Foreman Joe
- What They'll Do Next
- Shook The Earth
- Prices And Wages
- As A Special Treat
- Hypnotized
- With One Hand
- Unholy Row
- Sonny's Comic
- Newfangled Nonsense
- Smoking
- Not Quick Enough
- A Bit Crotchety
- In The Bandits' Lair

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions above

The True.....Spirit
On The Way To.....
Exciting.....
No Good For.....
If.....Survives
The.....Dropped And

"Bullets" Winners 1,844

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus "Magic Carpet" Award: A. P. McGregor, 12 Abbotsford Street, Falkirk:

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£25: J. Kirwan, 14 Princess Street, Wolverhampton: WHAT WE LIVE ON—*Built On*—THAT'S "DESTRUCTION"!

OTHER AWARDS. £10: Miss G. Banks, 13 Monkland's, Letchworth: TWO OLD DEARS—AWAITING *Your* "CALL," ALSO? £10: Mrs. D. Shaw, 2 New Steine Mansions, Brighton: ON A MAGIC CARPET—OF COMICS—TO *Underworld?* £5: Mrs. J. M. Fowler, The Hollies Cottage, Parsonage Street, Dursley: GARDEN OF DREAMS—BLOSSOMING—IT'S "RAINING" CONFETTI! £5: I. James, c/o 90 Sycamore Avenue, Newport, Mon: WHEN DAD LIT UP—NOBODY VISIBLE—EVERYBODY AUDIBLE! £5: Miss W. Locke, 106 Durley Avenue, Pinner: FAIRY GOLD—ROMANCE? ASK "SILVERY" SWEETHEARTS! £5: P. Smith, 1 Maen Gilfach, Trelewis, Glam: MIGHT HAVE BEEN SIGNING—*Your* "DEATH WARRANT," FLY! £5: Mrs. M. Wood, 10 High Street, Newport Pagnell: ON THE ECONOMIC PRECIPICE—WORLD'S "IRON HEEL" SLITHERING.

For ten winners of £2 10s. see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*.

50 *Bullets* Season Tickets for 10s. and 1,500 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in merit order; test—cleverness, aptness, originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross & Co. write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not over 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank given.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated September 20, and in JOHN BULL dated September 27), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See *Daily Herald* on Saturday, September 13, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,849 result.)

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

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Across Clues XWORD 801

3. Many shopkeepers today have too many
5. This is tinged with melancholy and regret
6. Contestants in Olympic games were all
7. Seasoned one is the more reliable
9. In most cases sticks things pretty well
12. They are sometimes too broad
15. It's characteristic of some public men that their words are

Down Clues

1. Though fixed, are often on the move
2. Is often the origin of a good deal of beat
4. They are very often collected
8. Portrait painter doesn't worry much about these
10. The sophisticated girl of the city cocktail bar isn't the type to appreciate this
11. There is often little this seen in ring
13. In this there may be excellent firing
14. Victim of smear campaign naturally feels this

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She wouldn't swing upon a star,
Not even if she could,
Because she'd hate to be so far
From Kensitas—that's good!

(Kensitas—that's good Virginia tobacco)

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